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De Re Poetica:
OR,
REMARKS
UPON
POETRY.
WITH
CHARACTERS
AND
CENSURES
OF THE
Most Considerable Poets,
WHETHER
ANCIENT or MODERN.
Extracted out of the Best and Choicest *Criticks.*

By Sir Thomas Pope Blount.

L O N D O N ,

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
John Earl of Mulgrave,
Knight of the Most
NOBLE ORDER
OF THE
G A R T E R.

My Lord, 128747

WHoever looks into the History of the first Ages of the World, will find, that nothing ever had a more general esteem amongst Mankind than Poetry. Poets were then dignified with the highest, and most

The Dedication.

Magnificent Titles, as the Civilizers of Men, the Preachers of Vertue, and the great Asserters of Morality. Hence therefore it was, that the Grecians did in a manner Deifie their Poets, stiling them ποιηται, Makers or Creators, which imported a sort of Divineship in 'em: And how great a Deference and Veneration the Romans had for those of this Profession, may sufficiently be inferr'd, from those proud and noble Structures, their Theatres, and Amphitheatres, Built not for the Use of their Divines, Orators, or Philosophers, but for their Poets. 'Tis true, my Lord, in process of time this Noble Art became much fyllied, and impair'd; as things most excellent are aptest to degenerate; but this is no more an Argument against Poetry, than Sects and Heresies were against Primitive Christianity. The Divine Plato then (as some were pleased to call him) might very well have spar'd that severe Censure, of Banishing Poets out of his Commonwealth; and the rather, because among none of their Writings, were there to be found, such Lewd and Obscene Discourses, as in his Phedrus and Convivium; So that, upon a fair hearing, even the Philosopher himself, wou'd with more justice have deservd the Outlawry.

My.

The Dedication.

My Lord,

Had I nothing at all of Inclination to this Address, as I hope *Your Lordship* will easily believe I have a great deal, yet I do not know, whether I ought not to have made it out of meer Policy. 'Tis certain, *my Lord*, You are a very dangerous Reader; a Writer therefore, who has but too much reason to apprehend Your Judgment, is bound in prudence to take You off if Possible. 'Tis not that I look upon a *Dedication* as a *Bribe*; but I find that sometimes, when we have an idle Present made us, which 'tis impossible to conceal, we are apt to be very favourable, and counterfeit a Value of the thing we perhaps secretly despise, rather than own to the World, that any has been so hardy to make us an Offering of what we shou'd think *little*.

But however this be, *Your Lordship* has been before-hand with me, and so much to my advantage, as to render such a Consideration wholly needless: Already You have indulg'd this *Piece*, and allowing it for *useful*, have given it the great Character

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Character desir'd to satisfie the *Author's* Ambition. For as it is entirely a *Collection*, wherein I have nothing to answer for, or hope any thing from, but the Choice and Distribution of the Matter; if I have but made a profitable one, and employ'd my pains beneficially for the World, 'tis all I had to pretend to. After this, *my Lord*, I shall make You no excuses for the Honour I do my self in this *Dedication*; And if in it I seem any thing Vain or Presuming, I am contented so to do, provided I may find the Justice to have it thought at the same time, that 'tis the good Opinion, not of *my self*, but of *Your Lordship*, that has made me so.

Some perhaps who may not think so favourably of this Undertaking, as *Your Lordship* wou'd appear to do, will be apt to say, I am in an Error all this while, and very fondly have mistaken that for *Your Lordship's Judgment*, which was but *Your Complement*. For both our sakes, *my Lord*, I am willing to hope it is not so; but if it really is, and I am indeed deceiv'd in this Particular, then *Your Lordship* must acknowledge, I have taken care however

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ever to revenge my self handsomely, and that I could not have punish'd you better; than in presenting You with the *Trifle*; which You only seem'd to approve.

Such as it is, *my Lord*, 'tis perfectly devoted to You. You will find it the easier perhaps to entertain it somewhat kindly, as it is intended at least to do Service to an *Art*, which 'tis well known, is *Your Lordship's* Favourite. Nor indeed do I wonder at it. For is it not Natural, and would not any Man be fond of a *Game*, which he play'd at so well, as always to come off a *Winner*?

I wou'd not, nor wou'd I be thought to flatter; but I think I may say without it, that as no People, perhaps, since the *Old Romans*, have carried *Poetry* so high in all Points as the *English*, so, that those who have engag'd of the better *Rank*, have particularly signaliz'd themselves. *Poetry* which to some Few has been a very good *Wife*, has yet in general been a better *Mistress*; And the *Gentlemen*, her *Lovers*, have found kinder Treatment, than the *Traders*, her *Husbands*. Methinks she appears with them in better Humour, and more

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more easie; There's more of *Nature* in the Business, and she seems to grant her Favours with greater Willingness. Indeed the Wit of the Men, is like the Beauty of the Women, of *Quality*; whose Features may be the same as other People's; but then there's something of *Fine*, something of *Free*, something of *Lively* in the Air, that makes a very agreeable Distinction. In this *Dividend* of Praise, *Your Lordship's* Stock of Merit entitles You to one of the largest shares. I will not drive it further. Among so many handsome *Muses*, 'twould scarce be civil to determine the Preeminence. I say *so many*, and 'tis for *Your Lordship's* credit that there are so many. One Wou'd not value much the Reputation of a good Face, where the general Deficiency that Way wou'd make a very Moderate one be admir'd. But in a *Nation of Beauty*, to be in the first Rank of the *Fair*, is indeed a *Glory*.

Thus, *my Lord*, You have serv'd in the *Poetick Army* with Honour; But then You have given us Lessons of *Discipline* and *Conduct* too. *Poetry* is doubly oblig'd to *Your Lordship* for some of the *best Rules*, as well
as

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as one of the most shining Examples. She is indebted yet further; She owes You not only what You have done Your self, but, in part, what has been done by another too. I cannot say You brought her a new Lover, but You brought an Old one on afresh. For I take it to be more than probable by the Beginning of that Poem, which I will not repeat, that the *Essay* on *Translated Verse* was perfectly occasion'd by the *Essay* on *Poetry*. I know not what *Your Lordship* thinks of this; but to be but Just to my Lord *Roscommon* we must conclude, That he was *too great a Master* to be provok'd, and set a Work by any One, who was not a *Great One* too.

With such good Inclinations and after such good Offices done to *Poetry*, give me leave, *my Lord*, once more to offer You what is here endeavour'd in its *Favour*. It has indeed a publick Design, but it has not that alone. We who make *Books*, are like Gentlemen who make *Balls*; Which, though intended for the Entertainment of the Town, use yet to have a more immediate Relation to some One of the *Fair Ladies*. If therefore what is now expos'd to

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the World, may be of any Relish to *Your Lordship*, 'tis the utmost Ambition of him who is,

(*My Lord*)

Your Lordships

Most Devoted, and Obliged

Humble Servant.

Thomas Pope Blount.

THE

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De

De Re Poetica:

O R,

REMARKS

UPON

POETRY.

Concerning the Antiquity of Poetry.

ARISTOTLE divides all Poetry, in relation to the Progress of it, into *Nature without Art*; *Art begun*; and *Art compleated*.

Mr. Dryden tells us, That Mankind, even the most Barbarous, have the Seeds of Poetry implanted in them.

The first Specimen of it was certainly shewn in the Praises of the Deity, and Prayers to him; And as they are of *Natural Obligation*, so, says Dryden, they are likewise of *Divine Institution*. Which Milton observing, introduces *Adam* and *Eve*, every Morning adoring God in *Hymns* and Prayers. The first Poetry was thus begun, in the Wild Notes of Natural Poe-

try, before the Invention of Feet and Measures. See Dryd. Dedic. before Juvenal, pag. 17.

Rapin observes, That, since Linus, Orpheus, and Eumolpus were famous for their Poems, before the Trojan Wars; those are certainly mistaken, who date Poetry from that time; I rather (*says he*) incline to their Opinion, who make it as old as the World it self; which Assertion as it ought to be understood of Poetry in general, so especially of Pastoral, which, according to Scaliger, was the most Ancient kind of Poetry, and resulting from the most Ancient way of living. Rap. de Carmine Pastorali.

Theophilus Gale remarks, That it is generally affirm'd by the Learned, that Poesie was the most Ancient of all Artificial Literature, especially amongst the Grecians; and we have for it the Testimony of Strabo, lib. 1. where he undertakes to prove, that Prose is only an imitation of Poesie, &c. Thus also Vossius (de Histor. Græcis, lib. 1. cap. 1. pag. 7.) asserts and proves, *That the Greek Historians and Philosophers were after the Poets.* So also Jackson (on the Authority of the Scripture) gives it as from unquestionable Antiquity, that all other set Speech, whether Historical or Rhetorical, was but the Progeny of Poesie, falling in latter times from its wonted State. And indeed (*says Gale*) it's evident from the Thing it self, that all the ancient Learning of the Grecians, both History, Morality, Philosophy, and Theologie, was delivered in Poesie. Hence Orpheus, and other Poets were anciently stil'd Διδάσκαλοι, Teachers; because they taught Men Theologie, and Morality, &c. Whence also the Ancient Discourses of the Philosophers were stiled Ἀστυγατα, Songs, &c. because they deliver'd their Precepts of Philosophy in Verse. So Pythagoras, and the rest of the Philosophers of his Sect: yea, among the

the Latins, *Carmina* were us'd for Moral Precepts.
Theoph. *Gale's Court of the Gentiles.*

Sir William Temple says, *Poetry*, he thinks, is generally agreed, to have been the first sort of Writing, that has been us'd in the World, and in several Nations to have preceeded the very Invention or Usage of *Letters*. This last, *says he*, is certain in *America*, where the first *Spaniards* met with many Strains of *Poetry*, and left several of them Translated into their Language; which seem to have flow'd from a true *Poetick Vein*, before any *Letters* were known in those Regions. The same is probable of the *Scythians*, the *Grecians*, and the *Germans*. Aristotle says, the *Agathyrsi* had their Laws all in *Verse*; and Tacitus, that the *Germans* had no *Annals* nor *Records* but what were so; and for the *Grecian Oracles*, delivered in them, we have no certain account when they began, but rather reason to believe it was before the Introduction of *Letters* from *Phoenicia* among them. Pliny tells it, as a thing known, that *Pherecides* was the first who writ *Prose* in the *Greek Tongue*, and that he liv'd about the time of *Cyrus*; whereas *Homer* and *Hesiod* liv'd some hundred of years before that Age; and *Orpheus*, *Linus*, *Musæus*, some Hundreds before them: And of the *Sybils*, several were before any of those, and in *Times* as well as *Places*, whereof we have no clear *Records* now remaining. What *Solon* and *Pythagoras* writ, is said to have been in *Verse*, who were something older than *Cyrus*; and before them, were *Archilochus*, *Simonides*, *Tyrtæus*, *Sappho*, *Stesichorus*, and several other Poets famous in their times. The same thing is reported of *Chaldea*, *Syria*, and *China*; and among the ancient *Western Goths* (our Ancestors) the *Runick Poetry* seems to be as old as their *Letters*; and their *Laws*, their *Precepts* of

Wisdom, as well as their Records, their Religious Rites, as well as their Charms and Incantations, to have been all in *Verse*.

Among the *Hebrews*, and even in *Sacred Writ*, the most *Ancient*, is by some Learned Men esteem'd to be the Book of *Job*; and that it was written before the time of *Moses*; and that it was a Translation into *Hebrew*, out of the old *Chaldaean* or *Arabian* Language. Now I think it is out of Controversie, that the Book of *Job* was written Originally in *Verse*, and was a Poem upon the Subject of the Justice and Power of God, and in Vindication of his Providence. But if we take the Books of *Moses* to be the most *ancient* in the *Hebrew Tongue*, yet the *Song of Moses* may probably have been written before the rest; as that of *Deborah*, before the Book of *Judges*, being Praises sung to God, upon the Victories or Successes of the *Israelites*, related in both. And I never read the last, says Sir *Will. Temple*, without observing in it, as True and Noble Strains of Poetry and Picture, as in any other Language whatsoever, in spight of all Disadvantages from Translations into so different Tongues, and common Prose. If an Opinion of some Learned Men both *Modern* and *Ancient* could be allow'd, that *Esdras* was the Writer or Compiler of the first Historical Parts of the *Old Testament*, though from the same Divine Inspiration as that of *Moses* and the other Prophets, then the *Psalms of David* would be the first Writings we find in *Hebrew*; and next to them, the *Song of Solomon*, which was written when he was young, and *Ecclesiastes* when he was old; so that from all sides, both *Sacred* and *Prophane*, it appears that *Poetry* was the first sort of Writing, known and used in the several Nations of the World.

It may seem strange, I confess, says Sir Will. Temple, upon the first Thought, that a sort of Style so regular and so difficult, should have grown in use, before the other so easie and so loose; But if we consider, what the first end of *Writing* was, it will appear probable from Reason as well as Experience; For the True and General end, was but the *Help of Memory*, in preserving that of *Words* and of *Actions*, which would otherwise have been lost, and soon vanish away, with the Transitory Passage of Humane Breath and Life. Before the Discourses and Disputes of *Philosophers* began to busie, or amuse the Græcian Wits, there was nothing Written in *Prose*, but either Laws, some short Sayings of Wise Men, or some Riddles, Parables, or Fables, wherein were couch'd, by the *Ancients*, many Strains of Natural or Moral Wisdom and Knowledge; and besides these, some short Memorials of Persons, Actions, and of Times.

Now 'tis obvious enough to conceive, says Sir Will. Temple, how much easier all such *Writings* should be Learnt and Remembred, in *Verse* than in *Prose*, not only by the Pleasure of Measures and of Sounds, which gives a great Impression to *Memory*, but by the Order of Feet which makes a great Facility of tracing one Word after another, by knowing what sort of Foot or *Quantity* must necessarily have preceeded or followed the Words we retain, and desire to make up.

This made *Poetry* so necessary, before *Letters* were Invented, and so convenient afterwards; and shews, that the great Honour and general Request, wherein it has always been, has not proceeded only from the Pleasure and Delight, but likewise from the Usefulness and Profit of *Poetical Writings*. Sir Will. Temple's *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 23, 24, 25, &c.

Poetry commended.

The Grecians, to shew the high Veneration they had for their Poets, call'd 'em *Makers* or *Creators*, which denoted a *Divineship* in 'em: And the Romans, to express the great Honour they had for theirs, styl'd 'em *Prophets*. Nor (indeed) is it easie to distinguish between the *Prophets* and *Poets* of *Israel*. For what is *Jeremy's Lamentation*, but a kind of *Sapphick Elegy*? And *David's Psalms* are not only *Poems*; but *Songs*, *Snatches*, and *Raptures* of a flaming *Spirit*.

Mr. Samuel Woodford tells us, That if we consider *Poesie* in her first Institution, e're she became a common Prostitute to Lust, Flattery, Ignorance, and Ambition, we shall find her alone acknowledged as the Sovereign Princess of the Civiliz'd World, and behold her from her Throne giving Laws, not only to their *Religion* and *Policy*, but also to their *Manners*. Her Court was esteem'd the proper and only School of *Vertue*, to which the greatest Princes form'd theirs, and under her Custody alone was kept seal'd that Fountain, whence all the profitable Instructions of Life were to be drawn. *Philosophy* it self was a thing of no use, and destitute of Arms, till *She* supply'd them; nor durst it appear in the World without the easie Chain of *Verse*, in token of Submission to her, for its *Pass-port*. And when afterward the *Porch* and *Academy* by main force brake it off, the strictest Precepts of the most Rigid Sect, as to the regulating of *Manners*, came infinitely short of those Examples, which *she* exhibited on her Theatres. The same may be said of almost all other Arts, that from *Her* they receive their Birth and Vigour. Neither was this

this Divine Mistress less courteously receiv'd into the Camp, where her soft Numbers were with pleasure heard amidst the confused noise of Arms. Hence mighty Generals had the best Instruction both for their Conduct and Valour, and were encouraged by the Records of Antiquity, which some Poet had faithfully preserved, to do themselves famous Acts, worthy the like Praise of Posterity. Such was Poesie of Old, with a Command as absolute, and unconfin'd, as her Dominions, and always found either serving at the Altars, or of Counsel Royal to the greatest Princes. **Sam. Woodford's Pref. to his Paraphrase upon David's Psalms.**

Rapin remarks, That the true Value of Poetry is so little known, that scarce ever is made a true Judgment of it. 'Tis the Talent of Wits only, that are above the Common Rank, to esteem of it according to its Merit: and one cannot consider, how *Alexander*, *Scipio*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Augustus*, and all the Great Men of Antiquity have been affected therewith, without conceiving a Noble Idea of it. Indeed, *Poesie*, of all *Arts*, is the most Perfect: for the Perfection of other *Arts* is limited; but this of *Poesie* has no Bounds. **Rap. of Poesie, Part I. Sect. I.**

Sir William Temple says, that, for his part, he does not wonder, that the famous Dr. Harvey, when he was reading *Virgil*, should sometimes throw him down upon the Table, and say, *He had a Devil*; nor that the Learned *Meric Casaubon*, should find such Charming Pleasures and Emotions, as he describes, upon the reading some parts of *Lucretius*; that so many should cry, and with down-right Tears, at some Tragedies of *Shakespear*; and so many more should feel such Turns or Curdling of their Blood, upon the reading, or hearing some excellent Pieces of *Poetry*; nor that *Ostavia* fell into

into a Swound, at the recital made by *Virgil* of those Verses in the Sixth of his *Æneids*.

This, says Sir William Temple, is enough to assert the Powers of Poetry, and discover the Ground of those Opinions of Old, which deriv'd it from *Divine Inspiration*, and gave it so great a share, in the supposed Effects of Sorcery or Magick. *Temple's Essay of Poetry*, pag. 12, 13.

Mr. Edmund Waller, on the Earl of Roscommon's Translation of Horace's Art of Poetry.

*Well sounding Verses are the Charm we use,
Heroick Thoughts, and Vertue to infuse ;
Things of deep Sense we may in Prose unfold,
But they move more, in lofty Numbers told ;
By the loud Trumpet, which our Courage aids ;
We learn that Sound, as well as Sense persuades.*

The Lord Roscommon, in his Essay on Translated Verse:

*By secret Influence of Indulgent Skies,
Empire, and Poesie together rise.
True Poets are the Guardians of a State,
And when They fail, portend approaching Fate.
For that which Rome to Conquest did inspire,
Was not the Vestal, but the Muses Fire ;
Heaven joyns the Blessings, no Declining Age
E're felt the Raptures of Poetick Rage.*

Sir Samuel

Remarks upon Poetry.

9

Sir Samuel Tuke, in his Prologue to the *Five Hours Adventure*:

*Our Ancient Bards their Morals did dispence
In Numbers, to insinuate the Sense ;
Knowing that Harmony affects the Soul,
And who our Passions charm, our Wills controul.*

Mr. John Oldham, in Imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry:

*Hence Poets have been held a Sacred Name,
And plac'd with First Rates in the Lists of Fame.
Verse was i the Language of the Gods of Old,
In which their Sacred Oracles were told :
In Verse were the first Rules of Vertue taught,
And Doctrine thence, as now from Pulpits sought :
By Verse some have the Love of Princes gain'd
Who oft vouchsafe so to be entertain'd,
And with a Muse their weighty cares unbend. }
Then think it no disparagement, dear Sir,
To own your self a Member of that Quire,
Whom Kings esteem, and Heaven does inspire. }*

Poetry Encourag'd in former Ages: but
discourag'd in this.

The wise Ben-Sirach, among other Characters of his Heroes, puts in this among the Rest, That they were such as found out Musical Tunes, and recited Verses in Writing. Eccles. 44. 5.

C

Sir

Sir William Temple says, The honour and request the Ancient Poetry has liv'd in, may not only be observ'd from the Universal Reception and Use in all Nations from *China* to *Peru*, from *Scythia* to *Arabia*, but from the Esteem of the Best and the Greatest Men, as well as the Vulgar. Among the *Hebrews*, *David* and *Solomon*, the Wisest Kings, *Job* and *Jeremiah*, the Holiest Men, were the Best Poets of their Nation and Language. Among the *Greeks*, the Two most Renowned Sages and Law-givers were *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, whereof the *Last* is known to have Excell'd in Poetry, and the *First* was so great a Lover of it, that to his Care and Industry we are said (by some Authors) to owe the Collection and Preservation of the loose and scatter'd Pieces of *Homer*, in the order wherein they have since appear'd. *Alexander* is reported neither to have Travel'd nor Slept, without those admirable *Poems* always in his Company. *Phalaris*, that was Inexorable to all other Enemies, relented at the Charms of *Stesichorus*'s Muse. Among the *Romans*, the First and great *Scipio*, pass'd the tott hours of his Life in the Conversation of *Terence*, and was thought to have a part in the Composition of his Comedies. *Cæsar* was an Excellent Poet as well as Orator, and compos'd a Poem in his Voyage from *Rome* to *Spain*; relieving the Tedious Difficulties of his March, with the Entertainments of his Muse. *Augustus* was not only a Patron, but a Friend and Companion of *Virgil* and *Horace*; and was himself, both an Admirer of Poetry, and a Pretender too, as far as his Genius would reach, or his busie Scene allow. 'Tis true, says Sir William Temple, since his Age, we have few such Examples of great Princes favouring or affecting Poetry, and as few perhaps of great Poets deserving it. Whether it be,
that

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II

that the fierceness of the Gothick Humours, or Noise of their perpetual Wars frighted it away ; or that the unequal mixture of the Modern Languages could not bear it. Certain it is, that the great Heights and Excellency, both of Poetry and Musick, fell with the Roman Learning, and Empire, and have never since recover'd the Admiration and Applauses that before attended them. *Temple's Essay of Poetry*, pag. 60, 61.

Mr. Charles Cleeve tells us, that it stands Recorded of the Famous *Alceus*, that great Poet and Souldier, that he used to make his Speeches in Verse at the head of his Army ; and, that he thought there was as much *Martial Musick* in the Harmonious Cadence of Numbers, as in the louder Noise of Drums and Hautboys.

He also remarks, That the great *Scipio* had *Ennius* always in his Camp : And a greater than *He*, the Macedonian Youth, carried a whole knot of the Brothers of the Quill, into *Asia* with him ; And, in short, that in those Times, there was scarce any Great Man without his *Poeta à Latere*.

But according to *Cleeve*, in this our Age, Mankind has quite different Thoughts ; For *Poets* are now reckon'd among that *Class* of *Beings*, that carry along with them no real Use, or Profit; but serve only to fill up the *Vacuities* of the *Creation*, and please purely upon the account of Variety. Nay, some are of opinion, that if *Nature* ever made any thing in vain, 'twas a *Poet*. Well, for once (says *Cleeve*) let *Poets* have the Worshipful Name of *Festers* to Mankind ; let us grant for once, That they are but *Risus Plorantis Mundi*, as was said of the *Rainbow*, the Sport and Caprice of *Nature* ; Men work'd off when she was in an excellent merry Vein : Yet hard Fate it is, That while, like *Silk-Worms*, they unravel their

very Bowels for the Pleasure and Luxury of Mankind ; they themselves must lye Entomb'd in their own Bottoms. **Charles Cleeve's Dedicat. to the Lord Churchill, before his Poems.**

The truth is, says Mr. John Norris, this most Excellent and Divine Art of Poetry, has of late been so cheapned and deprettiated, by the *Bungling Performances* of some, who thought themselves *Inspired*, and whose *Readers* too have been more kind to 'em than their *Planets*, that *Poetry* is grown almost out of *Repute*, and men come strongly prejudiced against any thing of this Kind, as expecting nothing but *Froth* and *Emptiness*; and to be a *Poet*, goes for little more than a *Country Fiddler*. But certainly He had once another *Character*, and that in as nice and wise an Age as this. If we may believe the great *Horace*, He was one

—Cui mens Divinior, atque os
Magna locuturum—

He had then his *Temples* surrounded with a *Divine Glory*, spoke like the *Oracle* of the God of *Wisdom*, and could describe no *Hero* greater than *Himself*. *Poetry*, says Mr. *Norris*, was once the *Mistress* of all the *Arts* in the *Circle*, that which held the *Reins* of the *World* in her hand, and which gave the *First*, and (if we may judge by the Effects) perhaps the *Best Institutes*, for the *Moralizing* and *Governing* the *Passions* of *Mankind*.

It may (says *Norris*) appear strange indeed, that in such a *Refining Age* as this, wherein all things seem ready to receive their *last Turn* and *finishing Stroke*, *Poetry* should be the only thing, that remains unimprov'd. And yet

yet so it happens, that which we generally have now a-days, is no more like the thing it was formerly, than Modern Religion is like Primitive Christianity. 'Tis with this as with our Musick. From Grave, Majestick, Solemn Strains, where deep Instructive Sense is sweetly convey'd in Charming Numbers, where equal Address is made to the Judgment and Imagination, and where Beauty and Strength go hand in hand, 'tis now for the most part dwindle'd down to light, frothy stuff, consisting either of mad Extravagant Rants, or slight Witticisms, and little Amorous Conceits, fit only for a Tavern Entertainment, and that too among Readers of a Dutch Palate. *Joh. Morris's Pref. to his Collection of Miscellanies.*

Mr. Thomas Rymer observes to us, That at the beginning of the Reformation, the Name of Poet was a mighty Scare-Crow to the Mumpsimus Doctors every where. The German Divines, and Professors at Cologn, were nettled and uneasie by this Poet, and the t'other Poet; Poet Reuclin, Poet Erasmus. Every body was reckon'd a Poet that was more a Conjurer than themselves. And belike, the Jesuits are still of Opinion, That the Stage-Plays have not done 'em Service. Campanella tells us, that the German and Gallican Heresie began with Sing-Song, and is carried on by Comedies and Tragedies. *Tho. Rymer's Short view of Tragedy, pag. 34.*

Oldham complaining of the little Encouragement Poets meet with in this Age:

Should mighty Sappho in these days revive,
And hope upon her Stock of Wit to live;
She must to Creswell's trudge to mend her Gains,
And lett her Tail to hire, as well as Brains.
What Poet ever fin'd for Sheriff? or who
By Wit and Sense did ever Lord Mayors grow.

My.

14 Remarks upon Poetry.

My own hard Usage here I need not press,
 Where you have every day before your face, }
 Plenty of fresh resembling Instances : }
 Great Cowley's Muse the same ill Treatment had,
 Whose Verse shall live for ever to upbraid }
 Th' ungrateful World, that left such Worth unpaid. }
 Waller himself may thank Inheritance
 For what he else had never got by Sense.
 On Butler who can think without just Rage,
 The Glory, and the Scandal of the Age ?
 Fair stood his hopes, when first he came to Town,
 Met every day with Welcomes of Renown,
 Courted, and lov'd by all, with Wonder read,
 And Promises of Princely favour fed :
 But what Reward for all had he at last,
 After a life in dull Expectance pass'd ?
 The Wretch at Summing up his mis-spent days,
 Found nothing left, but Poverty and Praise :
 Of all his Gains by Verse he could not save
 Enough to purchase Flannel and a Grave :
 Reduc'd to Want, lie in due time falls sick,
 Was fain to die, and be interr'd on Tick :
 And well might bless the Feaver that was sent
 To rid him hence, and his worse Fate prevent.

Dryden making his Complaint upon the same Subject :

We act by fits and starts, like drowning Men,
 But just peep up, and then dop down again.
 Let those who call us Wicked, change their Sense,
 For never Men liv'd more on Providence.
 Not Lott'ry Cavaliers are half so poor,
 Nor broken Citts, nor a Vacation Whore.

So wretched, that if Pharaoh could Divine,
He might have spar'd his Dream of Seven lean Kine,
And chang'd his Vision for the Mules Nine.

See the *Miscellany Poems*, pag. 293.

The same Author in another place :

The Fate, which governs Poets, thought it fit,
He shou'd not raise his Fortunes by his Wit.
The Clergy thrive, and the litigious Bar;
Dull Heroes fatten with the Spoils of War:
All Southern Vices, Heav'n be prais'd, are here;
But Wit's a Luxury you think too dear.
When you to cultivate the Plant are loth,
'Tis a shrewd Sign 'twas never of your growth:
And Wit in Northern Climates will not blow,
Except, like Orange-trees, 'tis hous'd from Snow.

Dryd. Prologue to *Aureng-Zebe*.

That good Humour is essentially
Necessary to a Poet.

A *Brabam Cowley* tells us, There is nothing that requires so much serenity and chearfulness of *Spirit*, as *Poetry*. The *Mind* must not be either overwhelm'd with the *Cares of Life*; or overcast with the *Clouds of Melancholly* and *Sorrow*; or shaken and disturb'd with the *Storms of Injurious Fortune*; it must, like the *Halcyon*, have *fair Weather* to breed in. The *Soul* must be fill'd with bright and delightful *Idea's*, when it undertakes to communicate delight to others; which is the

the main end of *Poesie*. One may see through the Stile of *Ovid de Trist.* the humbled and dejected Condition of Spirit with which he wrote it; there scarce remains any footsteps of that Genius,

Quem nec Jovis ira, nec ignes, &c.

The Cold of the Country had strucken through all his Faculties, and benumm'd the very Feet of his Verses. He is himself, methinks, like one of the Stories of his own *Metamorphoses*; and though there remain some weak Resemblances of *Ovid at Rome*, it is but as he says of *Niobe*,

*In vultu color est sine sanguine, lumina mæstis
Stant immota genis; nihil est in Imagine vivum,
Flet tamen—*

The truth is, for a Man to write well, it is necessary to be in good *Humour*; neither is *Wit* less Eclips'd with the unquietness of Mind, than *Beauty* with the Indisposition of Body. So that 'tis almost as hard a thing to be a Poet in despight of *Fortune*, as it is in despight of *Nature*. *Abrah. Cowley*, in his *Preface*.

Dryden remarks, That *Ovid*, going to his Banishment, and writing from on Shipboard to his Friends, excus'd the Faults of his Poetry by his Misfortunes; and told them, That good *Verses* never flow, but from a serene and compos'd Spirit. *Wit*, says Dryden, which is a kind of *Mercury*, with Wings fasten'd to his Head and Heels, can fly but slowly in a damp Air. *Dryd.* Dedic. before his Panegyrick on the Countess of Abingdon.

Mr. Thomas Flatman, in the Preface to the third Edition of his Poems, tells us, That he believes the Reader might easily discover in his several Poems, when 'twas Fair Weather, when Changeable, and when the Quick-Silver fell down to Storm and Tempest.

Sir Richard Fanshaw, in his Translation of *Pastor Fido*:

But in this Age (inhumane Age the while!)

The Art of Poetry is made too vile.

*Swans must have pleasant Nests, high feeding, fair
Weather to sing : and with a load of Care*

*Men cannot climb Parnassus Cliff : for he
Who is still wrangling with his Destiny*

*And his Malignant Fortune, becomes hoarse,
And loses both his Singing and Discourse.*

Act V. Scene I.

*That a Poet should keep his Fancy,
and Wit within due Bounds.*

Rapin observes, That nothing can more contribute to the perfection of Poetry, than a Judgment proportion'd to the Wit ; for the greater that the Wit is, and the more Strength and Vigour that the Imagination has to form those Idea's that enrich Poesie ; the more Wisdom and Discretion is requisite to moderate that heat, and govern its natural Fury. For Reason ought to be much stronger than the Fancy, to discern how far the Transports may be carried. 'Tis a great Talent to forbear speaking all one thinks, and to leave some-

thing for others to employ their Thoughts upon. 'Tis not ordinarily known how far Matters should be carried ; a Man of an accomplish'd Genius stops regularly where he ought to stop, and retrenches boldly what ought to be omitted. 'Tis a great fault not to leave a thing when 'tis well; for which *Apelles* so much blam'd *Protogenes*. This Moderation (says *Rapin*) is the Character of a great *Wit*, the Vulgar understand it not ; and (whatever is alledg'd to the contrary) never any, save *Homer* and *Virgil*, had the discretion to leave a thing when 'twas well. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on Aristot. of Poetie, 1. Part, Sect. xvi.

Rimer tells us, That *Fancy* in *Poetry*, is like *Faith* in *Religion*; it makes far Discoveries, and soars above *Reason*, but never clashes, or runs against it. *Fancy* leaps, and frisks, and away she's gone ; whilst *Reason* rattles the Chain, and follows after. *Reason* must consent and ratifie whatever by *Fancy* is attempted in its absence ; or else 'tis all null and void in Law. However, in the *Contrivance* and *Oeconomy* of a *Play*, *Reason* is always principally to be consulted. Those (says *Rimer*) who object against *Reason*, are the *Fanaticks* in *Poetry*, and are never to be sav'd by their *Good Works*. *Rimer* of the Tragedies of the last Age, pag. 8.

No Man (says *Dryden*, in his Preface to *Troilus and Cressida*) should pretend to write, who cannot temper his *Fancy* with his *Judgment* : Nothing is more dangerous to a raw Horseman, than a hot-mouth'd Jade without a Curb.

'Tis not enough to have a share of Wit,
There must be Judgment too to manage it;

For

Remarks upon Poetry.

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For Fancy's like a rough, but ready Horse,
Whose Mouth is govern'd more by Skill than Force.
Ch. Cotton before Flatman's Poems.

The Earl of Mulgrave, in that Incomparable Poem, his *Essay on Poetry*, tells us :

As all is Dullness, when the Fancy's bad,
So, without Judgment, Fancy is but mad ;
And Judgment has a boundless Influence,
Not only in the Choice of Words or Sence,
But on the World, on Manners, and on Men ;
Fancy is but the Feather of the Pen ;
Reason is that substantial useful Part,
Which gains the Head, while t'other wins the Heart.

Rapin remarks, That there is not a greater hindrance to the Epick or Heroick Poem, than to have a Wit too vast ; for such will make nothing exact in these kind of Works, whose chief Perfection is the Justness. These Wits that strike at all, are apt to pass the Bounds : the Swinge of their Genius carries them to Irregularity ; nothing they do is exact, because their Wit is not : All that they say, and all that they imagine, is always vast ; they neither have proportion in the Design, nor justness in the Thought, nor exactnes in the Expression. This fault is common to most of the Modern Poets, especially to the Spaniards. *Rap. Reflex. on Aristot. of Poesie, Part 2. Sect. 3.*

Another Fault which often does befall,
Is when the Wit of some great Poet shall
So Overflow, that is, be none at all ;

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That

That all his Fools speak Sense, as if possest,
 And each by Inspiration breaks his Fest ;
 If once the Justness of each Part be lost,
 Well we may laugh, but at the Poet's cost.
 That silly Thing, Men call Sheer-wit, avoid,
 With which our Age so nauseously is cloy'd ;
 Humour is all, Wit should be only brought
 To turn agreeably some proper Thought.

Mulgr. Essay on Poetry.

Wit is not to adorn, and guild each part ;
 That shews more Cost than Art.
 Jewels at Nose and Lips but ill appear ;
 Rather than all Things Wit, let none be there.
 Several Lights will not be seen,
 If there be nothing else between.
 Men doubt, because they stand so thick i'th' Skie,
 If those be Stars, which paint the Galaxie.

Abr. Cowley of Wit.

Dryden says, Though no Man will ever decry Wit, but he who despairs of it himself ; and who has no other quarrel to it, but that which the Fox had to the Grapes ; yet, as Mr. Cowley (who had a greater Portion of it than any Man I know) tells us in his Character of Wit, Rather than all Wit let there be none ; I think, says Dryden, there's no folly so great in any Poet of our Age, as the Superfluity and Waste of Wit was in some of our Predecessors : particularly we may say of Fletcher and of Shakespear, what was said of Ovid, *In omni ejus ingenio, facilius quod rejici, quidam quod adjici potest, inveneries.* The contrary of which was true in Virgil, and our Incomparable Johnson. **Dryd.** Pref. to the Mock-Astrologer.

That

That a Poet may write upon the Subject of Love ; but he must avoid Obscenity.

So it is, says Abraham Cowley, that Poets are scarce thought Free-men of their Company, without paying some Duties, and Obliging themselves to be true to Love. Sooner or later they must all pass through that Tryal, like some Mahumetan Monks, that are bound by their Order, once at least in their Life, to make a Pilgrimage to Mecca.

In furias ignemq; ruunt ; Amor omnibus idem.

But we must not always make a judgment of their Manners from their Writings of this kind ; as the Romanists uncharitably do of Beza, for a few lascivious Sonnets compos'd by him in his Youth. It is not in this Sense that Poesie is said to be a kind of Painting ; it is not the Picture of the Poet, but of Things and Persons imagin'd by him. He may be in his own practice and disposition a Philosopher, nay a Stoick, and yet speak sometimes with the Softness of an Amorous Sappho.
Ayr. Cowley in his Preface.

*Tet do I not their Sullen Muse approve,
Who from all modest Writings banish Love.*

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 59.

But though Love be a Subject allow'd to Poets, yet any thing that's in the least Obscene, must wholly be.

be avoided. The *Muses* of true Poets, says Rapin, are as chaste as *Vestals*.

Here, as in all things else, is most unfit
Bare Ribaldry, that poor Pretence to Wit.

Mulgrave's Essay on Poetry.

Immodest Words admit of no defence;
For Want of Decency, is want of Sense.

Roscommon on Translated Verse, pag. 8.

Much less can that have any place,
At which a Virgin hides her face :
Such Dross, the Fire must purge away ; 'tis just
The Author blush there, where the Reader must.

Abr. Cowley's Ode of Wit.

Obscene Discourse, says a *Modern Author*, is now grown a thing so common, that one would think we were fallen into an Age of *Metamorphosis*, and that the *Brutes* did (not only *Poetically*, and in *fiction*) but *really* speak. For the Talk of *Many* is so *Bestial*, that it seems to be but the Conceptions of the more libidinous Animals cloath'd in Humane Language. And yet even *this* must pass for *Ingenuity*, and be counted among the highest Strains of *Wit*. A wretched Debasing of that *Sprightful Faculty*, thus to be made the *Interpreter* to a *Goat* or *Boar* : for doubtless had those Creatures but the *Organs* of *Speech*, their Fancies lie enough that way to make them as good Company, as those who more studiously apply themselves to this sort of Entertainment. *The Author of the Whole Duty of Man*, in his Government of the Tongue, pag. 204, 205.

That

*That the most difficult part of a Poet,
is, to describe the Manners, and the
Passions.*

Rapin tells us, That as the Painter draws Faces by their Features; so the Poet represents the Minds of Men by their Manners: and the most general Rule for Painting the Manners, is to exhibit every Person in his proper Character. A Slave, with base Thoughts, and servile Inclinations. A Prince, with a liberal Heart, and Air of Majesty. A Souldier, fierce, insolent, surly, and inconstant. An Old Man, covetous, wary, jealous. 'Tis in describing the Manners, that Terence triumph'd over all the Poets of his time, in Varro's Opinion, for his Persons are never found out of their Characters. He observes their Manners in all the Niceties and Rigours of Decorum, which Homer himself has not always done, as some pretend. Longinus cannot endure the Wounds, the Adulteries, the Hatred, and all the other Weaknesses to which he makes the Gods obnoxious, contrary to their Character.

The Sovereign Rule for treating of Manners, says Rapin, is to Copy them after Nature, and above all to study well the Heart of Man, to know how to distinguish all its Motions. 'Tis this which none are acquainted with: the Heart of Man is an Abyss, where none can sound the Bottom: it is a Mystery, which the most Quick-sighted cannot pierce into, and in which the most cunning are mistaken; at the worst the Poet is oblig'd to speak of Manners according to the common Opinion. Ajax must be represented grum, as Sophocles;

phocles; *Polyxena* and *Iphigenia*, generous, as *Euripides* has represented them. To conclude, the *Manners* must be proportionable to the *Age*, to the *Sex*, to the *Quality*, to the *Employment*, and to the *Fortune* of the Persons. And, in a word, as nothing tolerable can be perform'd in *Poetry* without this knowledge, so with it all becomes admirable. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on Aristotle of Poesie, I. Part, Sect. xxv.

The *Passions*, says *Rapin*, give no less Grace to *Poetry*, than the *Manners*; when the *Poet* has found the Art to make them move by their *natural Springs*. *Quintilian* tells us, without the *Passions* all is cold and flat in the Discourse: for they (says *Rapin*) are, as it were, the *Soul* and *Life* of it; but the Secret is, to express them according to the several Estates, and different degrees from their Birth: and in this distinction consists all the *Delicacy*, wherewith the *Passions* are to be handled, to give them that *Character*, which renders them admirable, by the secret *Motions* they impress on the *Soul*. *Hecuba* in *Euripides* falls into a *Swound* on the Stage, the better to express all the *Weight* of her Sorrow, that could not be represented by Words. But *Achilles* appears with too much *Calmness* and *Tranquility* at the *Sacrifice* of *Iphigenia*, design'd for him in *Marriage* by *Agamemnon*: his Grief has Expressions too little suiting to the natural *Impetuosity* of his *Heart*. *Clytemnestra* much better preserves her *Character*; she discovers all the *Passion* of a Mother in the loss of a Daughter, so lovely as was this *Unfortunate Princess*, whom they were about to *Sacrifice*, to appease the *Gods*: and *Agamemnon* generously lays aside the tenderness of a *Father*, to take, as he ought, the *Sentiments* of a *King*; He neglected his own *Interest*, to provide for the *Publick*. To conclude, 'tis this exact Distinction of the different

different Degrees of *Passion*, that is of most effect in *Poetry*: for this gives the Draught of *Nature*, and is the most infallible *Spring* for moving the *Soul*; but, says *Rapin*, it is good to observe, that the most ardent and lively *Passions* become *cold* and *dead*, if they be not well manag'd, or be not in their place. The *Poet* must judge when there must be a *Calm*, and when there must be *Trouble*; for nothing is more ridiculous, than *Passion* out of *Season*. But it is not enough to move a *Passion* by a notable *Incident*, there must be Art to conduct it, so far as it should go; for by a *Passion* that is imperfect and abortive, the *Soul* of the *Spectator* may be *shaken*; but this is not enough, it must be *ravish'd*.

Rap. *ibid.* Sect. xxxvi.

Dryden remarks, That to describe the *Passions* naturally, and to move them artfully, is one of the greatest Commendations that can be given to a *Poet*; *To write pathetically*, says *Longinus*, cannot proceed but from a *lofty Genius*. A *Poet*, says Dryden, must be born with this *Quality*; yet, unless he help himself by an acquir'd Knowledge of the *Passions*, what they are in their own nature, and by what *Springs* they are to be mov'd, he will be subject either to raise them where they ought not to be rais'd, or not to raise them by the just Degree of *Nature*, or to amplifie them beyond the Natural Bounds, or not to observe the *Crisis*, and *Turns* of them, in their cooling and decay: All which Errors, says Dryden, proceed from want of Judgment in the *Poet*, and from being unskill'd in the Principles of *Moral Philosophy*. Nothing is more frequent in a Fanciful Writer, than to foil himself by not managing his Strength: therefore, as in a *Wrestler*, there is first requir'd some measure of force, a well-knit Body, and active Limbs, without which all Instruction would be vain; yet, these

being granted, if he want the *Skill* which is necessary to a *Wrestler*, he shall make but small advantage of his natural Robustiousness: So in a *Poet*, his inborn Vehemence and force of Spirit, will only run him out of breath the sooner, if it be not supported by the help of *Art*. The roar of *Passion* indeed may please an *Audience*, three parts of which are ignorant enough, to think all is moving which is *Noise*, and it may stretch the Lungs of an Ambitious *Actor*, who will die upon the Spot for a thund'ring Clap; but it will move no other *Passion* than *Indignation*, and contempt, from Judicious Men. He who would raise the *Passion* of a Judicious *Audience*, says a learned *Critick*, must be sure to take his *Hearers* along with him; if they be in a *Calm*, 'tis in vain for him to be in a *Huff*: he must move them by degrees, and kindle with 'em; otherwise 'e will be in danger of setting his own heap of *Stubble* on fire, and of burning out by himself, without warming the Company that stand about him.
Dydg. Pref. to Troilus and Cressida.

*Would you your Works for ever should remain,
And, after Ages past, be sought again?
In all you write, observe with Care and Art
To move the Passions, and incline the Heart.
If, in a Labour'd Act, the pleasing Rage
Cannot our Hopes and Fears by turns ingage,
Nor in our Mind a feeling Pity raise;
In vain with Learned Scenes you fill your Plays:
Your cold Discourse can never move the Mind
Of a Stern Critick, naturally unkind;
Who, justly tir'd with your Pedantick flight,
Or falls asleep, or censures all you write.*

*The Secret is, Attention first to gain ;
 To move our Minds, and then to entertain :
 That, from the very op'ning of the Scenes,
 The first may shew us what the Author means.
 I'm tir'd to see an Actor on the Stage,
 That knows not whether he's to Laugh, or Rage ;
 Who, an Intrigue unravelling in vain,
 Instead of Pleasing, keeps my Mind in pain :
 I'de rather much the nauseous Dunce should say
 Downright, my Name is Hector in the Play ;
 Than with a Mass of Miracles, ill joyn'd,
 Confound my Ears, and not instruct my Mind.*

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 30, 31.

*Wouldst have me weep ? thy self must first begin : }
 Then, Telephus, to pity I incline,
 And think thy Case, and all thy Suff'rings mine ; }
 But if thou'rt made to act thy part amiss,
 I can't forbear to sleep, or laugh, or hiss ;
 Let Words express the Looks which Speakers wear ;
 Sad, fit a Mournful, and dejected Air ;
 The Passionate must buff, and storm, and rave ;
 The Gay be pleasant, and the Serious grave.
 For Nature works, and moulds our Frame within,
 To take all manner of Impressions in.
 Now makes us hot, and ready to take fire,
 Now Hope, now Joy, now Sorrow does inspire ;
 And all these Passions in our face appear ;
 Of which the Tongue is sole Interpreter :
 But he whose Words and Fortunes do not suit,
 By Pit and Gall'ry both, is hooted out.*

Oldham in Imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry, pag. 10.

That a Poet must take great care of his Language and Expression.

The Expression or Language, says Rapin, must have five Qualities, to have all the Perfection that Poetry demands: It must be *apt, clear, natural, splendid, and numerous.*

The Language must in the first place be *apt*, and have nothing that is impure or barbarous: for though one may speak what is *great, noble, and admirable*; all is despicable and odious, if the *Purity* be wanting: the greatest *Thoughts* in the World have not any *Grace*, if the *Construction* be defective. This *Purity* of Writing is of late so strongly Establish'd among the French, that he must be very *hardy*, says Rapin, that will make *Verse* in an Age so delicate and curious, unless he understand the *Tongue* perfectly.

Secondly, the Language must be *clear*, That it may be Intelligible; for one of the greatest faults in Discourse, is *Obscurity*: in this Camoens, whom the Portuguese call their *Virgil*, is extreamly blameable; for his *Verse* are so *obscure*, that they may pass for *Mysteries*: and the Thoughts of Dante are so *profound*, that much Art is requir'd to dive into them. Poetry demands a more *clear Air*, and what is less incomprehensible.

The third Quality, is, That it be *natural*, without affectation, according to the Rules of *Decorum*, and *good Sense*. Studied Phrases, a too florid *Stile*, fine *Words*, Terms strain'd and remote, and all extraordinary Expressions, are insupportable to the true *Poeſie*; only *Simplicity* pleases, provided it be sustain'd with *Greatness* and *Majesty*: but this *Simplicity*, says Rapin, is not known, except

except by Great Souls, the little Wits understand nothing of it; 'tis the Master-piece of Poesie, and the Character of Homer and Virgil. The Ignorant hunt after Wit, and fine Thoughts, because they are ignorant.

Fourthly, The Language must be *lofty* and *splendid*; for the common and ordinary Terms are not proper for a Poet; he must use Words that partake nothing of the *Base* and *Vulgar*, they must be *Noble* and *Magnificent*; the Expressions *strong*, the Colours *lively*, the Draughts *bold*: his Discourse must be such as may equal the greatness of the Idea's of a Workman, who is the Creator of his Work.

In the last place, The Language must be *Numerous*, to uphold that *Greatness* and *Air of Majesty*, which reigns throughout in Poesie; and to express all the force and dignity of the great things it speaks: Terms that go off roundly from the Mouth, and that fill the Ears, are sufficient to render all *Admirable*, as Poesie requires. But, says Rapin, this is not enough, that the Expressions be *Stately* and *Great*, there must likewise be *Heat* and *Vehemence*: and above all, there must *shine* throughout the Discourse a certain *Grace* and *Delicacy*, which makes the principal *Ornament*, and most *Universal Beauty*.
Rap. Reflex. on Arist. of Poesie, I. Part, Sect. xxvii.

*Observe the Language well in all you write,
And swerve not from it in your loftiest flight.*

*The smoothest Verse, and the exactest Sense
Displease us, if ill English give offence:*

*A barb'rous Phrase no Reader can approve;
Nor Bombast, Noise, or Affectation love.*

*In short, without pure Language, what you write,
Can never yield us Profit, or Delight.*

*Boileau's Art of Poetry, English'd by Sir Will. Soame,
Rapin.*

Rapin does further remark, That there is a particular Rhetorick for Poetry, which the Modern Poets scarce understand at all ; this Art consists in discerning very precisely what ought to be said *Figuratively*, and what to be spoken *simply*; and in knowing well, where Ornament is requir'd, and where not. *Tasso* understood not well this Secret, he is too trim and too polite, in places, where the Gravity of the Subject demanded a more simple and serious Stile : As for Example, where *Tancred* comes near the Tomb of *Clorinda*, he makes the Unfortunate Lover, who came from slaying his Mistress, speak *points*, instead of expressing his Sorrow naturally; he commits this fault in many other places. *Guarini* in his *Pastor Fido*, and *Bonarelli* in his *Phillis*, are often guilty of this Vice ; they always think rather to speak things *wittily*, than *naturally*: this is the most ordinary Rock to mean Wits, who suffer their Fancy to flie out after the pleasing Images they find in their way : they rush into the Descriptions of *Groves*, *Rivers*, *Fountains*, and *Temples*, which *Horace* calls *Childish*, in his Book of *Poesie*. 'Tis only the Talent of Great Men to know to speak, and to be silent ; to be florid, and to be plain ; to be lofty, and to be low ; to use Figures, and to speak simply ; to mingle Fiction and Ornament, as the Subject requires ; finally, to manage all well in his Subject, without pretending to give delight, where he should only instruct ; and without rising in great Thoughts, where natural and common Sentiments are required ; to conclude, a simple Thought in its proper place, is more worth than all the most exquisite Words, and Wit out of Season. *Rap.* *Ibid.* Sect. xxxiv.

Figures of Speech, which Poets think so fine,
Art's needless Varnish to make Nature shine,
Are all but Paint upon a Beauteous face,
And in Descriptions only claim a Place.
But to make Rage declaim, and Grief discourse,
From Lovers in despair fine things to force,
Must needs succeed, for who can chuse but pity
A dying Hero miserably Witty ?
But, oh, the Dialogues, where Jest and Mock
Is held up like a Rest at Shittle-cock !
Or else like Bells, eternally they chime,
They sigh in Simile, and die in Rhime.

Mulgr. *Essay on Poetry.*

'Tis Mr. Dryden's Observation, That, as in a Room, contriv'd for State, the height of the Roof shou'd bear a proportion to the Area; so, in the Heightenings of Poetry, the Strength and Vehemence of Figures shou'd be suited to the Occasion, the Subject, and the Persons. All beyond this (says Dryden) is monstrous; 'tis out of Nature; 'tis an Excrescence, and not a living part of Poetry. *Dryd.* in a Dedic. to the Lord Haughton, before the Spanish Fryar.

Concerning the Poetick Licence.

THe Poetick Licence, says Dryden, in his *Apology for Heroick Poetry*, is that Birthright, which is deriv'd to Poets, from their great Fore-fathers, even from Homer down to Ben. And they who would deny it them,

them, have, in plain terms, the *Fox's Quarrel to the Grapes*, they cannot reach it. I will, says Dryden, presume to say, That the Boldest Strokes of Poetry, when they are manag'd Artfully, are those which most delight the Reader.

*Poets, like Lovers, should be bold and dare,
They spoil their Business with an Over-care :
And he who servilely creeps after Sence,
Is safe, but ne're will reach an Excellence.*

Dryd. Prologue to *Tyran. Love.*

If no Latitude, says Dryden, is to be allow'd a Poet, you take from him not only his *Licence of Quidlibet audendi*, but you tie him up in a straiter compass than you would a *Philosopher*. This is indeed *Musas colere severiores*: You would have him follow *Nature*, but he must follow her on foot: You have dismounted him from his *Pegasus*. Dryden's *Essay of Dram. Poesie*, pag. 48.

The truth is, says Sir William Temple, there is something in the Genius of Poetry, too *Libertine* to be confin'd to many Rules; and whoever goes about to subject it to such Constraints, loses both its *Spirit* and *Grace*, which are ever Native, and never learnt, even of the best Masters. 'Tis as if, to make *Excellent Honey*, you should cut off the Wings of your *Bees*, confine them to their *Hive*, or their *Stands*, and lay *Flowers* before them, such as you think the sweetest, and like to yield the finest Extraction; you had as good pull out their *Stings*, and make arrant *Drones* of them. They must range through *Fields*, as well as *Gardens*, chuse such *Flowers* as they please, and by *Proprieties* and *Scents* they only know and distinguish: They must Work

[...]

up

up their Cells with admirable Art, extract their Honey with infinite Labour, and sever it from the Wax, with such Distinction and Choice, as belongs to none but themselves to perform, or to judge. *Temple's Essay of Poetry*, pag. 20, 21.

Mr. Richard Wooley tells us, that *Lucan*, whose best Character consists, in having made some very happy *Bold Strokes*, would have been spoil'd, had he been checkt every time he offer'd at too lofty *Flights*. But now we find he has been successfully *Bold*, whereas more regularity would have render'd him too flat and *cold*: But now *feliciter audet*, is his just *Encomium*. It is therefore (says Wooley) with Poets, as 'tis with those young Heroes, whom an *undiscreet Valour* more becomes, than an over-circumspect and cautious Prudence. And therefore Sir William Temple remarks, That Rules at best are capable only to prevent the making of bad *Verses*, but never able to make men good Poets. *Rich. Wooley's Compleat Library*, Novemb. 1692.

The Priviledge that Ancient Poets claim {
Now turn'd to Licence by too just a Name,
Belongs to None but an Establisht Fame,
Which scorns to take it ——————

Absurd Expressions, Crude, Abortive Thoughts,
All the lewd Legion of Exploded Faults,
Base Fugitives to that Asylum fly,
And Sacred Laws with Insolence defie.

Not thus our Heroes of the Former Days,
Deserv'd and Gain'd their never fading Bays;
For I mistake, or far the greatest Part,
Of what some call Neglect, was Study'd Art.
When Virgil seems to Trifle in a Line,
'Tis like a Warning-Piece, which gives the Sign

To wake your Fancy, and prepare your Sight,
 To reach the noble Height of some unusual Flight.
 Roscommon on Translated Verse, pag. 21.

Whether Art or Nature contributes
 most to Poetry.

Rapin tells us, This is one of those Questions unsolv'd, which might be proper for a Declamation, and the Decision is of small Importance: it suffices, that we know both the one and the other are of that moment, that none can attain to any Sovereign Perfection in Poetry, if he be defective in either: So that both (saith Horace) must mutually assist each other, and conspire to make a Poet accomplish'd. But though Nature be of little value, without the help of Art, yet we may approve of Quintilian's Opinion, who believ'd, that Art did less contribute to that Perfection, than Nature. And by the Comparison that Longinus makes betwixt Apollonius and Homer, Erastosthenes and Archilochus, Bacchilides and Pindar, Ion and Sophocles, the former of all which never transgressed against the Rules of Art, whereas these other did; it appears, that the advantage of Wit is always preferr'd before that of Art. Rap. Reflex. on Aristot. of Poesie, Part I. Sect. xiii.

Concerning Poets there has been Contest,
 Whether they're made by Art or Nature best:
 But if I may presume in this Affair,
 Amongst the Rest my Judgment to declare,

No Art without a Genius will avail,
And Parts without the help of Art will fail;
But both Ingredients joynly must unite
To make the happy Character compleat.

Oldham, in Imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry,
pag. 35.

One may be an *Orator*, says Rapin, without the natural Gift of *Eloquence*, because Art may supply that defect; but no Man can be a *Poet* without a *Genius*: the want of which, no Art or Industry is capable to repair. This *Genius* is that *Celestial Fire* intended by the *Fable*, which enlarges and heightens the *Soul*, and makes it express things with a lofty Air. Happy is he (says Rapin) to whom *Nature* has made this Present, by this he is raised above himself; whereas others are always low and creeping, and never speak but what is mean and common. He that hath a *Genius*, appears a *Poet* on the smallest and most minute Subjects, by the turn he gives them, and the noble manner in which he expresses himself. **Rap.** *Reflex. on Aristotle of Poësie, Part 1. Sect. vi.*

Rash Author, 'tis a vain presumptuous Crime,
To undertake the Sacred Art of Rhime;
If at thy Birth the Stars that rul'd thy Sence
Shone not with a Poetick Influence:
In thy strait Genius thou wilt still be bound,
Find Phœbus deaf, and Pegasus unsound.

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 1.

Number, and Rhime, and that Harmonious Sound,
Which never does the Ear with Harshness wound,

Are necessary, yet but vulgar Arts,
 For all in vain these superficial parts
 Contribute to the Structure of the Whole
 Without a Genius too, for that's the Soul ;
 A Spirit which inspires the Work throughout,
 As that of Nature moves the World about ;
 A Heat which glows in every Word that's writ,
 'Tis something of Divine, and more than Wit ;
 It self unseen, yet all things by it shown,
 Describing All Men, but describ'd by none.
 Where dost thou dwell ? what Caverns of the Brain
 Can such a vast, and mighty thing, contain ?

Mulg. Essay on Poetry.

That a Poet should not be addicted
 to Flattery.

Putarch tells us, That Philoxenus, for despising some dull Poetry of Dionysius, was by him condemn'd to dig in the Quarries : from whence being by the Mediation of Friends remanded, at his return Dionysius produced some other of his Verses, which as soon as Philoxenus had read, he made no reply, but calling to the Waiters, said, Let them carry me again to the Quarries. Now, if a Heathen Poet could prefer a Corporeal Slavery before a Mental, what name of Reproach is great enough for them, who can submit to both, in pursuit of those poor sordid Advantages they project by their Flatteries ?

Rapin says, Nothing has contributed more to the dis-reputation of Poetry, than those vile and unmanly Flatteries,

series, whereby the greatest part of Poets have debas'd themselves.

But Want at last base Flattery entertain'd,
 And old Parnassus with this Vice was stain'd :
 Desire of Gain dazzling the Poets Eyes,
 Their Works were fill'd with fulsome Flatteries.
 Thus needy Wits a vile Revenue made,
 And Verse became a Mercenary Trade.
 Debase not with so mean a Vice thy Art ;
 If Gold must be the Idol of thy Heart,
 Fly, fly th' unfruitful Heliconian Strand,
 Those Streams are not inrich'd with Golden Sand :
 Great Wits, as well as Warriours, only gain
 Laurels and Honours for their Toil and Pain :
 But what ? an Author cannot live on Fame,
 Or pay a Reck'ning with a lofty Name :
 A Poet to whom Fortune is unkind,
 Who when he goes to Bed has hardly din'd ;
 Takes little Pleasure in Parnassus Dreams,
 Or relishes the Heliconian Streams.
 Horace had Ease and Plenty when he writ,
 And free from Cares, for Money or for Meat, }
 Did not expect his Dinner from his Wit.
 'Tis true ; but Verse is cherish'd by the Great,
 And now none famish who deserve to eat :
 What can we fear, when Virtue, Arts, and Sense,
 Receive the Stars propitious Influence ?

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 63, 64.

I pity, from my Soul, Unhappy Men,
 Compell'd by Want to Prostitute their Pen ;

Who

*Who must, like Lawyers, either Starve or Plead,
And follow, right or wrong, where Guinny's lead.*

Roscommon's Essay on Translated Verse,
pag. 18.

Concerning the Eglogue, Bucolick, or Pastoral.

Julius Scaliger tells us, That the *Pastoral* was the most Ancient kind of *Poetry*, and resulting from the most *Ancient* way of living: Singing (says Scaliger) first began amongst Shepherds as they fed their Flocks, either by the Impulse of Nature, or in Imitation of the Notes of Birds, or the whispering of Trees. **Jul. Scalg.** De Re Poëticâ, lib. 1. cap. 4.

Since the first Men were either Shepherds or Ploughmen, and Shepherds, as may be gather'd out of *Thucydides* and *Varro*, were before the others, they were the first that, either invited by their leisure, or (which *Lucretius* thinks more probable) in imitation of Birds, began a *Tune*.

*Through all the Woods they heard the charming Noise
Of chirping Birds, and try'd to frame their Voice,
And imitate. Thus Birds instructed Man,
And taught them Songs, before their Art began.*

Lucretius also, in the same place, informs us, That Shepherds were first taught, by the rushing of soft Breezes amongst the Canes, to blow their Reeds, and so by degrees to put their Songs in tune.

And

*And whilst soft Evening Gales blew o're the Plains,
And shook the sounding Reeds, they taught the Swains ;
And thus the Pipe was fram'd, and tuneful Reed ;
And whilst the tender Flocks securely feed,
The harmless Shepherds tun'd their Pipes to Love,
And Amaryllis sounds in every Grove.*

Creech's Translat. of Lucret. lib. v. pag. 182.

How Verse first began, Tibullus plainly tells us, in those Verses translated by Mr. Creech :

*First weary at his Plough, the lab'ring Hind
In certain Feet his rustick Words did bind :
His dry Reed first he tun'd at Sacred Feasts
To thank the bounteous Gods, and chear his Guests.*

From this Birth, as it were, of Poetry, Verse began to grow up to greater Matters; for from the Common Discourse of Plough-men and Shepherds, first Comedy, that Mistress of a Private Life, next Tragedy, and then Epick Poetry arose. This Maximus Tyrius confirms in his Twenty first Dissertation, where he tells us, That Plough-Men just coming from their Work, and scarce cleans'd from the filth of their Employment, did use to flurt out some sudden and extempore Catches; and from this Beginning Plays were produc'd, and the Stage erected. But to return to the Eglogue or Pastoral.

The Eglogue, says Rapin, is the most considerable of the little Poems; it is an Image of the Life of Shepherds. Therefore the Matter is low, and nothing Great is in the Genius of it; its business is to describe the Loves, the Sports, the Piques, the Jealousies, the Disputes, the Quarrels, the Intrigues, the Passions, the Adventures, and

and all the little *Affairs* of *Shepherds*. So that its Character must be simple, the Wit easie, and the Expression common; it must have nothing that is exquisite, neither in the Thoughts, nor in the Words, nor in any *fashions* of Speech; in which the *Italians*, who have writ in this kind of *Verse*, have been mistaken; for they always aim at being witty, and to say things too finely. The true Character of the *Eglogue*, says *Rapin*, is Simplicity and Modesty; its Figures are sweet, the Passions tender, the Motions easie; and though sometimes it may be passionate, and have little Transports, and little Despairs, yet it never rises so high as to be fierce or violent; its *Narrations* are short, *Descriptions* little, the *Thoughts* ingenious, the *Manners* innocent, the *Language* pure, the *Verse* flowing, the *Expressions* plain, and all the *Discourse* natural; for this is not a great *Talker*, that loves to make a noise. The *Models* to be proposed to write well in this sort of *Poesie*, are *Theocritus* and *Virgil*. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on Aristotle of Poesie, Part 2. Sect. xxvii.

Concerning Satyr.

IT is the Observation of Dr. *Tillotson*, His present Grace of Canterbury, that *Satyr* and *Invective* are the easiest kind of *Wit*. Almost any degree of it, *says he*, will serve to abuse and find fault. For *Wit* is a keen Instrument, and every one can cut and gash with it; but to carve a beautiful Image, and to polish it, requires great Art and Dexterity. To praise any thing well, is an argument of much more *Wit*, than to abuse.

buse. A little Wit, and a great deal of ill Nature, will furnish a Man for Satyr; but the greatest Instance of Wit is to commend well. And perhaps, says Tillotson, the Best Things are the hardest to be duly commended. For though there be a great deal of Matter to work upon, yet there is great Judgment requir'd to make choice. And where the Subject is great and excellent, it is hard not to sink below the dignity of it. *Tillots.* 1. Vol. Serm. pag. 123.

*Such is the mode of these Censorious days,
The Art is lost of knowing how to Praise ;
Poets are envious now, and Fools alone
Admire at Wit, because themselves have none.
Yet, whatsoe'er is by vain Criticks thought,
Praising is harder much, than finding fault ;
In homely Pieces ev'n the Dutch excell,
Italians only can draw Beauty well.*

*Earl of Mulgrave, on Hobbs, see the Poeticum
Examen, pag. 99.*

Dr. Barrow tells us, It is not any Argument of considerable Ability in him that haps to please this way: a slender faculty will serve the turn. The sharpness cometh not from Wit so much as from Choler, which furnishes the lowest Invention with a kind of pungent Expression, and giveth an Edge to every spightful Word: So that any dull Wretch does seem to scold Eloquently and Ingeniously. Commonly (says Barrow) they who seem to excel this way, are miserably flat in other discourse, and most dully serious: they have a particular unaptness to Describe any Good thing, or commend any worthy Person; being destitute of right Ideas, and proper terms answerable to such purposes:

G their

their Representations of that kind are absurd and un-handsome; their *Elogies* (to use their own way of speaking) are in effect *Satyrs*, and they can hardly more abuse a Man, than by attempting to commend him; like those in the Prophet, who were *Wise to do ill, but to do well had no Knowledge*. *Barrow's 2d Serm. against Evil-speaking*, pag. 73, &c.

Dryden says, There has been a long Dispute amongst the *Modern Criticks*, whether the *Romans* deriv'd their *Satyr* from the *Grecians*, or first invented it themselves. *Julius Scaliger*, and *Heinsius*, are of the *first Opinion*; *Casaubon*, *Rigaltius*, *Dacier*, and the Publisher of the *Dauphin's Juvenal*, maintain the latter. If (says Dryden) we take *Satyr* in the general Signification of the Word, as it is us'd in all *Modern Languages*, for an *Invective*, 'tis certain that it is almost as old as *Verse*; and though *Hymns*, which are *Praises* of *God*, may be allow'd to have been before it, yet the *Defamation* of others was not long after it. After *God* had curs'd *Adam* and *Eve* in *Paradise*, the Husband and Wife excus'd themselves, by laying the blame on one another; and gave a beginning to those *Conjugal Dialogues* in *Prose*, which the *Poets* have perfected in *Verse*. The third Chapter in *Job* is one of the *first Instances* of this Poem in *Holy Scripture*: unless we will take it higher, from the latter end of the *Second*; where his Wife advises him to curse his *Maker*.

This Original, I confess, says Dryden, is not much to the Honour of *Satyr*; but here it was *Nature*, and that deprav'd; When it became an *Art*, it bore better Fruit. *Dryd. in his Dedic. before Juvenal*, pag. 16.

Rapin remarks, That the Principal End of *Satyr*, is to instruct the People by discrediting *Vice*. It may therefore be of great advantage in a State, when taught to keep within its bounds. But as *Flatterers* embroil them-

themselves with the Publick, whilst they strive too much to please Particulars ; so (says Rapin) it happens, that the Writers of Satyr disoblige sometimes Particulars, whilst they endeavour too much to please the Publick : and as downright Praises are too gross ; so Satyr that takes off the Mask, and reprehends Vice too openly, is not to be allow'd of: But though it be more difficult to Praise, than to find fault, because it is easier to discover in People what may be turn'd into Ridicule, than to understand their Merit ; 'tis requisite notwithstanding equally to have a Wit for the one, as for the other. For the same Delicacies of Wit, that is necessary to him who praiseth, to purge his Praises from what is deform'd, is necessary to him who findeth fault to clear the Satyr from what is bitter in it. And this Delicacy which properly gives the relish to Satyr, was (says Rapin) heretofore the Character of Horace, for it was only by the way of Jest and Merriment that he exercis'd his Censure. For he knew full well, that the sporting of Wit, hath more effect, than the strongest Reasons, and the most Sententious Discourse, to render Vice ridiculous. In which Juvenal, with all his Seriousness, has so much ado to succeed. *Rap. Reflex. on Aristotle of Poesie, Part 2. Sect. xxviii.*

'Lucilius was the Man who bravely bold,
To Roman Vices did this Mirror hold,
Protected humble Goodness from Reproach,
Show'd Worth on foot, and Rascals in the Coach:
Horace his pleasing Wit to this did add,
And none uncensur'd could be Fool or Mad;
Unhappy was that Wretch, whose Name might be
Squar'd to the Rules of their sharp Poetry.'

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 24.
G 2 When

When Shakespear, Johnson, Fletcher, rul'd the Stage,
 They took so bold a Freedom with the Age,
 That there was scarce a Knave, or Fool, in Town,
 Of any Note, but had his Picture shown ;
 And (without doubt) though some it may offend, {
 Nothing helps more than Satyr, to amend
 Ill Manners, or is trulier Virtue's Friend.
 Princes may Laws Ordain, Priests gravely Preach,
 But Poets, most successfully will teach.
 For as a Passing-Bell, frights from his Meat,
 The greedy Sick-man, that too much wou'd eat ;
 So when a Vice, ridiculous is made,
 Our Neighbour's shame keeps us from growing Bad.

Earl of Rochester in Defence of Satyr.

Of all the Ways that Wisest Men could find
 To mend the Age, and mortifie Mankind,
 Satyr well writ has most successful prov'd,
 And Cures, because the Remedy is lov'd.
 'Tis hard to write on such a Subject more,
 Without repeating Things said oft before.
 Some Vulgar Errors only we remove,
 That stain a Beauty which so much we love.
 Of well-chose Words some take not care enough,
 And think they should be as the Subject rough ;
 This great Work must be more exactly made,
 And sharpest Thoughts in smoothest Words convey'd :
 Some think, if sharp enough, they cannot fail,
 As if their only Business was to rail ;
 But Human Frailty nicely to unfold,
 Distinguishes a Satyr from a Scold.
 Rage you must hide, and Prejudice lay down,
 A Satyr's Smile is sharper than his Frown ;

So, while you seem to slight some Rival Youth
Malice it self may pass sometimes for Truth.

Wulgr. *Essay on Poetry.*

The Author of the Preface to *Valentinian* observes, That *Satyr*, that most needful part of our Poetry, has of late been more abus'd, and is grown more degenerate than any other; most commonly, like a Sword in the hands of a *Mad-man*, it runs a Tilt at all manner of Persons, without any sort of distinction or reason; and so ill-guided is this furious *Career*, that the *Thrusts* are most aim'd, where the *Enemy* is best arm'd. Womens Reputations (of what Quality or Conduct soever) have been reckon'd as lawful Game as Watchmen's Heads; and 'tis thought as glorious a piece of Gallantry by some of our *Modern Sparks*, to libel a Woman of Honour, as to kill a Constable, who is doing his duty; *Justice* is not in their Natures, and all kind of *Useful Knowledge* lies out of the way of their Breeding; *Slander* therefore is their Wit, and *Dress* is their Learning; *Pleasure* their Principle, and *Interest* their God.

Concerning Tragedy.

Rimer tells us, That Authors generally look no higher than *Thespis* for the Original of *Tragedy*; yet *Plato* reckons it much ancienter. *Minos*, says he, for all his Wisdom, was overseen in making War upon *Athens*; where lived so many *Tragick Poets*, that represented him, and fixed on him and his Family a Name and

and Character never to be wiped off. The *Judges of Hell*, *Pasiphae*, and her *Minotaur*, are upon record to all Posterity.

All agree, says Rimer, that in the beginning *Tragedy* was purely a *Religious Worship*, and *Solemn Service* for their *Holy-days*. Afterwards it came from the *Temples* to the *Theatre*, admitted of a *Secular allay*, and grew to be some *Image* of the *World*, and *Humane Life*. When it was brought to the utmost perfection by *Sophocles*, the *Chorus* continued a necessary part of the *Tragedy*; but that *Musick* and the *Dancing* which came along with the *Chorus*, were meer *Religion*, were no part of the *Tragedy*, nor had any thing of *Philosophy* or *Instruction* in them.

The *Government* had the same care of these *Representations*, as of their *Religion*, and as much caution about them. The *Laws* would not permit a private Person to make a *Chappel*, raise an *Altar*, or consecrate an *Image*; otherwise all Places would in time be so cramm'd, from the *Devotion* of Women and weak Heads, that a Man should not set a foot, nor find Elbow-room, for *Gods*, and *Shrines*, consecrated *Stuff*. The like *Providence* had they (says Rimer) for the *Theatre*. No *Poet* under the *Age* of thirty or forty years was allow'd to present any *Play* to be acted. More of their *Publick Money* was spent about the *Chorus*, and other Charges and Decorations of their *Theatre*, than in all their Wars with the Kings of *Persia*. And when brought to their last Extremity, that no other Bank remain'd for them, wherewith to carry on a War, without which War they could not longer expect to be a People, the delicate turn us'd by *Demosthenes*, in starting the Motion, for applying this *Theatre-Money* to the War, is observ'd as a Master-piece of Address by the Orators. *Did I say* (quoth *Demosthenes*) *that the Theatre-Money* was to be apply'd to the War?

Remarks upon Poetry. 47

Demosthenes) the Theatre-Money may be applied to the War? no, by Jove, not I.

Monasteries and Church-lands were never with us so Sacred.

The Romans, says Rimer, were a rougher sort of People; and wonderful jealous were they of the Grecian Arts, or of any Commerce with a Politer Nation. Till Numa Pompilius, very little had they of either Religion or Poetry among them. Nor made He use of it farther, than for the Hymns and Anthems at the Altars and Sacrifice: Secular Poetry had they none. And indeed at that time it was hardly safe for Poetry to stir from Sanctuary; for in the World, the rigid Fathers had given the Poets an ugly Name, calling them *Graffatores*; which, in Modern Italian, may be rendred *Banditi*.

It was with much ado, and under an Usurpation by the Decemvirat, that the Romans stooped to a Correspondence with Greece, for the Commodity of their Laws; which were not till then imported; and from thence we hear of the *Twelve Tables*.

As for the Stage-Plays; it was a Plague that first introduced them. They try, by that strange Worship, to appease their Gods; and avert the Judgment so heavy on them. But their first Secular Plays, says Rimer, were taught by *Livius Andronicus*, some two hundred Years after the *Twelve Tables* at Rome. He set up for some skill in this Dramatick way, Translating from the Greek.

After all the goodly Commendations and pretty things, by *Quintilian* acknowledg'd due to *Plautus* and *Terence*, frankly he concludes, *In Comædiâ maximè claudicamus—Vix levem consequimur Umbram*; that the Roman is infinitely short of the Greek Comedy, hardly comes

up to the shadow of it. Horace would fain with some colour make good the Comparison betwixt the Romans and the Greeks, on that Topick, to flatter Augustus. But Virgil, with no disadvantage to his Compliment, gave up the Cause.

Excudent alii—

*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento.
Hæ tibi erunt Artes—*

Let them have all the Praises due to their polite Learning : To govern and to give Laws, be these thy Arts, O Cæsar ! This is thy Glory without a Rival.

Upon the whole, says Rimer ; This Dramatick Poetry was like a Forreign Plant amongst the Romans, the Climate not very kindly, and cultivated but indifferently ; so might put forth Leaves and Blossoms, without yielding any Fruit of much Importance. Athens was the genuine Soil for it, there it took, there it flourish'd, and ran up to overtop every thing Secular and Sacred. There had this Poetry the Honour, the Pomps, and the Dignity ; their Regalia, and their Pontificalia. But the Romans mostly look'd no deeper than the Show. They took up with the outside and Portico ; their Genius dwelt in their Eye ; there they fed it, there indulg'd and pamper'd it immoderately : So that their Theatres and their Amphitheatres, says Rimer, will always be remember'd, though their Tragedy and Comedy be only Shadow ; or *Magni Nominis Umbra*. They reckon'd these Matters of Wit and Speculation, not so consistent with the severity of an Active Warlike People : Something of their old *Saturn* lay heavy in their heads to the very last. Rimer's Short view of Tragedy, chap. 2.

Rapin observes, That *Tragedy* of all parts of *Poesie*, is that which *Aristotle* has most discuss'd; and where he appears most exact. *Aristotle* alledges, that *Tragedy* is a publick *Lecture*, without comparison more instructive than *Philosophy*; because it teaches the *Mind* by the *Sense*, and rectifies the *Passions* by the *Passions* themselves, in calming by their emotion the troubles they excite in the *Heart*. The *Philosopher* had observ'd two important Faults in *Man* to be regulated, *Pride* and *Hard-Heartedness*; and he found for both these Vices a cure in *Tragedy*. For it makes *Man* modest, by representing the great *Masters of the Earth* humbled; and it makes him tender and merciful, by shewing him on the *Theatre* the strange Accidents of Life, and the unforeseen Disgraces, to which those of the highest Quality are subject. But because *Man* is naturally timorous, and compassionate, he may fall into another Extream, to be either too fearful, or too full of pity; the too much Fear may shake the Constancy of *Mind*, and the too great Compassion may enfeeble the Equity. 'Tis the business of *Tragedy* to regulate these two Weaknesses; it prepares and arms him against Disgraces, by shewing them so frequent in the most considerable Persons; and he shall cease to fear *Ordinary Accidents*, when he sees such *Extraordinary* happen to the *Highest part of Mankind*. But as the End of *Tragedy* is to teach Men not to fear too weakly the Common Misfortunes, and to manage their fear; it serves also to teach them to spare their Compassion, for Objects that deserve it. For there is an Injustice in being mov'd at the Afflictions of those who deserve to be miserable. One may see without pity *Clytemnestra* slain by her Son *Orestes* in *Aeschylus*, because she had cut the throat of *Agamemnon* her Husband; and one cannot see *Hippolytus* die

die by the Plot of his Step-Mother *Phedra* in *Euripides*, without Compassion; because he dy'd not but for being Chast and Vertuous. This, says *Rapin*, to me seems, in short, the Design of *Tragedy*, according to the System of *Aristotle*, which to me appears admirable, but which has not been explain'd as it ought by his Interpreters, who (probably) did not well enough understand the Mystery, to unfold it as they ought. *Rapin Reflex. on Aristot. of Poesie, Part 2. Sect. xvii.*

Rapin does further remark, That the Faults of Modern *Tragedy* are ordinarily, that either the Subjects which are chosen are mean and frivolous; or the *Fable* is not well wrought, and the *Contrivance* not regular; Or that they are too much crowded with *Episodes*; Or that the *Characters* are not preserv'd and sustain'd; Or that the *Incidents* are not well prepar'd; Or that the *Machins* are forc'd; Or that, what is admirable fails in the probability; Or the probability is too plain and flat; Or that the *Surprises* are ill manag'd, the *Knots* ill ty'd, the *loosing* them not natural; the *Catastrophe's* precipitated; the *Thoughts* without Elevation; the *Expressions* without Majesty; the *Figures* without Grace; the *Passions* without colour; the *Discourse* without Life; the *Narrations* cold, the *Words* low, the *Language* improper; and all the *Beauties* false. They speak not enough to the heart of the Audience, which is the only Art of the Theatre, where nothing can be delightful but that which moves the Affections, and which makes impression on the Soul; little known is that *Rhetorick* which can lay open the *Passions* by all the natural degrees of their Birth, and of their *Progress*: Nor are those *Morals* at all in use, which are proper to mingle those different *Interests*, those opposite *Glances*, those clashing *Maxims*, those *Reasons* that destroy each other,

to

to ground the Incertitudes and Irresolutions, and to animate the *Theatre*. For the *Theatre* being essentially destin'd for *Action*, nothing ought to be idle, but all in agitation, by the thwarting of Passions that are founded on the different Interests that arise; or by the Embroilment that follows from the *Intrigue*. Likewise (says *Rapin*) there ought to appear no *Actor*, that carries not some design in his head, either to cross the designs of others, or to support his own; all ought to be in trouble, and no *Calm* to appear, till the *Action* be ended by the *Catastrophe*. Nor, finally, is it well understood, that it is not the admirable *Intrigue*, the surprising and wonderful Events, the extraordinary Incidents that make the Beauty of a *Tragedy*; it is the *Discourses* when they are *Natural* and *Passionate*. *Sophocles* was not more successful than *Euripides* on the *Theatre* at *Athens*, but by the *Discourse*; though the *Tragedies* of *Euripides* have more of *Action*, of *Morality*, of wonderful *Incidents*, than those of *Sophocles*. It is by these *Faults*, more or less great, that *Tragedy* in these days has so little effect on the Mind; that we no longer feel those agreeable *Trances*, that make the pleasure of the Soul; nor find those *Suspensions*, those *Ravishments*, those *Surprises*, those *Admirations*, that the ancient *Tragedy* caus'd; because the *Modern* has nothing of those astonishing and terrible Objects that affrighted, whilst they pleas'd the Spectators, and made those great Impressions on the Soul, by the Ministry of the Passions. In these days Men go from the *Theatre* as little mov'd as when they went in, and carry their *Heart* along with them *untoucht*, as they brought it: So that the pleasure they receive there, is become as Superficial, as that of *Comedy*; and our gravest *Tragedies* are (to speak properly) no more but *Heightened Comedies*. *Ibidem*, Sect. xxi.

At first the Tragedy was void of Art ;
A Song ; where each Man Danc'd, and Sung his Part,
And of God Bacchus roaring out the Praise
Sought a good Vintage for their Jolly days :
Then Wine, and Joy, were seen in each Man's Eyes,
And a fat Goat was the best Singer's prize.
Thespis was first, who, all besmeard with Lee,
Began this pleasure for Posterity :
And, with his Carted Actors, and a Song,
Amus'd the People as he pass'd along.
Next, Aeschylus the diff'rent Persons plac'd,
And with a better Masque his Players grac'd :
Upon a Theatre his Verse express'd,
And show'd his Hero with a Buskin dress'd.
Then Sophocles, the Genius of his Age,
Increas'd the Pomp, and Beauty of the Stage,
Ingag'd the Chorus Song in every part,
And polish'd rugged Verse by Rules of Art :
He, in the Greek, did those Perfections gain,
Which the weak Latin never could attain.
Our Pious Fathers, in their Priest-rid Age,
As impious, and prophane, abhorr'd the Stage :
A Troop of silly Pilgrims, as 'tis said,
Foolishly Zealous, scandalously Play'd
(Instead of Heroes, and of Love's Complaints)
The Angels, God, the Virgin, and the Saints.
At last, right Reason did his Laws reveal,
And show'd the Folly of their ill-plac'd Zeal,
Silenc'd those Nonconformists of the Age,
And rais'd the lawful Heroes of the Stage :
Only th' Athenian Masque was laid aside,
And Chorus by the Musick was supply'd.

*Ingenious Love, inventive in new Arts,
 Mingled in Plays, and quickly touch'd our Hearts :
 This Passion never could resistance find,
 But knows the shortest Passage to the Mind.*

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 32, 33, 34.

Rimer says, The *Chorus* was the Root and Original, and is certainly always the most necessary Part of *Tragedy*; that the *Spectators* thereby are secured, that their Poet shall not juggle, or put upon them in the matter of *Place*, and *Time*, other than is just and reasonable for the Representation. And the Poet, says Rimer, has this benefit; the *Chorus* is a goodly Show, so that he need not ramble from his Subject out of his Wits for some Foreign Toy or Hobby-Horse, to humour the Multitudē. Aristotle, in his *Poëtica*, tells us of two *Senses* that must be pleas'd, our *Sight*, and our *Ears*; And, says Rimer, it is in vain for a Poet (with Bays in the Rehearsal) to complain of Injustice, and the wrong Judgment in his Audience, unless these two *Senses* be gratified. *Rimer's Short View of Tragedy, Chap. I.*

But Dryden seems to be of another Opinion, in relation to the *Chorus*; For (says he) if the English Poets have not yet brought the *Drama* to an absolute perfection, yet at least we have carried it much farther than those ancient Greeks, *Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles*; who beginning from a *Chorus*, cou'd never totally exclude it, as we have done, who find it an unprofitable Incumbrance, without any necessity of entertaining it amongst us; and without the possibility of Establishing it here, unless it were supported by a Publick Charge. *Dryd. Dedic. before his Examen Poëticum.*

Concerning Comedy.

Monsieur Hedelin, Abbot of Aubignac, tells us, That as for Comedy, Donatus seems to think it was invented by Shepherds and Country People, who us'd to dance about the Altars of Apollo; Surnamed Nomian, and sing at the same time some Hymns in honour of him; But, says Hedelin, I had rather believe Athenaeus, who makes it take its Rise with Tragedy, and that they were both consecrated to Bacchus, and not to Apollo: Except Donatus would judge of all Theatral Actions by the Apollinary Games, which indeed were Scenick, and celebrated to the Honour of Apollo. In fine, Hedelin concludes, That Comedy and Tragedy were born together; and accordingly we find in Clemens Alexandrinus, that the Invention of Comedy was attributed to one Sisarion of Tearia; it may be, says Hedelin, because he was the first that compos'd the Hymns of Bacchus, after the Sacrifice of the Goat by Icarius. And this, says Hedelin, may suffice to appease the Quarrels of the Learned upon the Origine of Comedy, since they are not agreed neither in Times, Places, nor Persons. *Hedelin's Art of the Stage, Book the 4th, Chap. 2.*

Monsieur Hedelin does farther observe, That Comedy has not the same Progress with Tragedy, it being long detain'd in Confusion and Disorder: Nay, even in Aristophanes's time, which was after Sophocles and Euripides, it was full of Satyrical Reflections, and Scandalous Slanders. It will (says Hedelin) be hard for us to mark the degrees of its progress, from the time that it was

a *Rural Hymn*, to that of its perfection upon the Stage; because, as Aristotle says, *It being not so Noble as Tragedy*, there has been less care to make Observations upon it; and the Magistrates were a great while before they concern'd themselves in giving the Chorus's, but us'd to leave them to the Discretion of those who made the Comedy. Nevertheless, says Hedelin, if I may venture to bring to light things buried in so long an Obscurity, I think that it begun to have *Actors* about the same time as *Tragedy* did, that is, under Epicharmus, the Sicilian, the Contemporary of *Thespis*; and before that time I have not observ'd any Speakers. And 'tis from this, that the Sicilians do maintain, That *Comedy* was invented at *Syracusa*, because Epicharmus was that Country-man: not that they can pretend that there was no *Comedy* before him, (for we have yet the Fragments of *Alcæa*, a *Comedy* two Hundred years before his time) but because He first introduc'd an *Actor* with the *Chorus*. We may say as much of *Sannyrion*, who was the first that added *Masks* and *Buffoons*, according to *Athenaeus*; and the same of *Cratinus*, who settled three *Actors*, and made the whole Composition regular; the same of *Aristophanes*, who gave *Comedy* a further perfection; And so of all those whom *Diomedes* calls the first *Comick Poets*, though they came a great while after *Comedy* was invented. *Hedelin ibid.*

Comedy, says Rapin, is an Image of Common Life; its end is to shew on the Stage the faults of Particulars, in order to amend the faults of the Publick, and to correct the People through a fear of being render'd Ridiculous. So that which is most proper to excite Laughter, is that which is most essential to *Comedy*. That pleasant turn, that *Gayety* which can sustain the delicacy

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delicacy of his Character, without falling into *Coldness*, nor into *Buffoonry*; that fine *Raillery*, which is the Flower of *Wit*, is the Talent which *Comedy* demands: but it must always be observ'd, that the *Ridiculing* part, for the Entertainment on the *Theatre*, ought to be no other but the Copy of the *Ridiculous* that is found in *Nature*. *Comedy* is as it should be, when the *Spectator* believes himself really in the Company of such Persons as he has represented, and takes himself to be in a Family whilst he is at the *Theatre*; and that he there sees nothing but what he sees in the World. For *Comedy*, says *Rapin*, is worth nothing at all, unless he know, and can compare the *Manners* that are exhibited on the Stage, with those of such Persons, as he has Conversation withal. 'Twas by this, that *Menander* had so great Success amongst the *Grecians*; and the *Romans* thought themselves in *Conversation*, whilst they sat beholding the *Comedies* of *Terence*; for they perceiv'd nothing but what they had been accustomed to find in ordinary Companies. 'Tis the great Art of *Comedy* to keep close to *Nature*, and never leave it; to have common Thoughts and Expressions fitted to the Capacity of all the World: For, says *Rapin*, it is most certainly true, that the most gross strokes of *Nature*, whatever they be, please always more, than the most delicate, that are not *Natural*: nevertheless Base and Vulgar Terms are not to be permitted on the *Theatre*, unless supported by some kind of *Wit*. The *Proverbs* and *Wise Sayings* of the *People* ought not to be suffer'd, unless they have some pleasant Meaning, and unless they are *Natural*. This is the most general Principle of *Comedy*; by which, whatever is represented, cannot fail to please; but without it, nothing can. 'Tis only by adhering to *Nature*, that the *Probability* can be maintained,

tain'd, which is the sole Infallible Guide, that may be follow'd on the Theatre. Without Probability all is lame and faulty, with it all goes well: none can run astray who follow it; and the most ordinary faults of Comedy happen from thence, that the *Decencies* are not well observ'd, nor the *Incidents* enough prepar'd. 'Tis likewise necessary to take heed that the Colours employ'd to prepare the *Incidents*, be not too gross, to leave to the *Spectator* the pleasure of finding out himself what they signify. But the most ordinary Weakness of our Comedies is the *Unravelling*; scarce ever any, says *Rapin*, succeed well in that, by the difficulty there is in untying happily that Knot which had been tyed. It is easie to wind up an Intrigue, 'tis only the work of Fancy; but the *unravelling* is the pure and perfect Work of the Judgment. 'Tis this that makes the Success difficult, and if one would thereon make a little Reflection, he might find, that the most Universal fault of *Comedies*, is, that the *Catastrophe* of it is not *Natural*. It remains to examine, whether in *Comedy* the Images may be drawn greater than the *Natural*, the more to move the Minds of the Spectators, by more shining Portraits, and by stronger Impressions? that is to say, whether a Poet may make a *Miser*, more Covetous; a *Morose Man*, more morose and troublesome than the Original? To which *Rapin* answers, That *Plautus*, who studied to please the *Common People*, made them so, but *Terence*, who would please the better sort, confin'd himself within the Bounds of *Nature*, and he represented Vices, without making them either better or worse. *Rapin Reflex. on Arist. of Poesie, Part 2. Sect. xxv.*

Dryden tells us, That he values not a Reputation gain'd from *Comedy*; and that he thinks it, in its

own nature inferiour to all sorts of Dramatick writing. He says, Low Comedy especially requires, on the Writers part, much of Conversation with the Vulgar, and much of ill Nature in the Observation of their Follies.
Dryd. Pref. to the Mock-Astrologer.

But in another place, He tells us how difficult it is to write Comedy well :

*Of all Dramatick Writing, Comick Wit,
As 'tis the best ; so 'tis most hard to hit,
For it lies all in level to the Eye,
Where all may judge, and each defect may spie.
Humour is that which every day we meet,
And therefore known as every publick Street ;
In which, if e're the Poet go astray,
You all can point, 'twas there he lost his way.
But, what's so common, to make pleasant too,
Is more than any Wit can always do,
For 'tis, like Turks, with Hen and Rice to treat ;
To make Regalio's out of Common Meat.*

Dryd. Epilogue to the *Wild Gallant.*

Concerning the Epick, or Heroick Poem.



THe Epick Poem, says Rapin, is that which is the greatest and most noble in Poesie ; it is the greatest Work that Humane Wit is capable of. All the Nobleness, and all the Elevation of the most perfect Genius, can hardly suffice to form one such as is requisite for

for an *Heroick Poet*; the difficulty of finding together *Fancy* and *Judgment*, heat of *Imagination*, and *Sobriety* of *Reason*, *Precipitation* of *Spirit*, and *Solidity* of *Mind*, causes the rareness of this Character, and of this happy *Temperament* which makes a *Poet* accomplish'd; it requires great *Images*, and yet a greater *Wit* to form them. To conclude, There must be a *Judgment* so solid, a *Discernment* so exquisite, such perfect *Knowledge* of the *Language*, in which he writes; such obstinate *Study*, profound *Meditation*, vast *Capacity*, that scarce whole Ages can produce one *Genius* fit for an *Epick Poem*. And, says *Rapin*, it is an *Enterprise* so bold, that it cannot fall into a *Wise Man's Thoughts*, but affright him. Yet how many *Poets* have we seen of late days, who, without *Capacity*, and without *Study*, have dar'd to undertake these sort of *Poems*; having no other Foundation, but only the *heat* of their *Imagination*, and some *briskness* of *Spirit*. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Aristot.* of *Poesie*, Part 2. Sect. 2.

By painful Steps we are at last got up
Parnassus Hill, on whose bright *Airy Top*
The Epick Poets so *Divinely Show*,
And with just Pride behold the Rest below.
Heroick Poems have a just pretence
To be the utmost reach of Human Sence,
A Work of such inestimable Worth,
There are but Two the World has yet brought forth,
Homer and Virgil: with what awful Sound
Do those meer Words the Ears of Poets wound!
Just as a Changeling seems below the Rest
Of Men, or rather is a two-legg'd Beast,
So these Gigantick Souls amaz'd we find
As much above the rest of Human Kind.

Nature's whole Strength united! Endless Fame,
And Universal Shouts attend their Name.
Read Homer once, and you can read no more,
For all things else appear so dull and poor,
Verse will seem Prose, yet often on him look,
And you will hardly need another Book.

Mulg. Essay on Poetry.

Sir William Temple tells us, That no Composition requires so many several Ingredients, or of more different sorts, than the Heroick Poem; nor that to excel in any Qualities, there are necessary so many Gifts of Nature, and so many Improvements of Learning and of Art. For there must be an Universal Genius, of great Compass as well as great Elevation. There must be sprite-ly Imagination or Fancy, fertile in a Thousand Productions, ranging over infinite Ground, piercing into every Corner, and, by the light of that true Poetical Fire, discovering a thousand little Bodies or Images in the World, and Similitudes among them, unseen to common Eyes, and which could not be discover'd, without the Rays of that Sun.

Besides the Heat of Invention, says Sir William Temple, and liveliness of Wit, there must be the coldness of good Sense, and soundness of Judgment, to distinguish between things and conceptions, which at first sight, or upon short glances, seem alike, to choose among infinite Productions of Wit and Fancy, which are worth preserving and cultivating, and which are better stifled in the Birth, or thrown away when they are born, as not worth bringing up. Without the Forces of Wit, all Poetry is flat and languishing; and without the Succours of Judgment, 'tis wild and extravagant. The true Wonder of Poetie is, That such Contraries must

must meet to compose it, a Genius both penetrating and solid ; in Expression both Delicacy and Force ; and the Frame or Fabrick of a true *Poem*, must have something both sublime and just, amazing and agreeable. There must be a great Agitation of Mind to invent, a great Calm to judge and correct ; there must be upon the same Tree, and at the same Time, both *Flower* and *Fruit*. To work up this Metal into exquisite Figure, there must be employ'd the *Fire*, the *Hammer*, the *Chizel*, and the *File*. There must be a general Knowledge both of *Nature* and of *Arts* ; and to go the lowest that can be, there are required *Genius*, *Judgment*, and *Application* ; for without *this last*, all the rest will not serve turn, and none ever was a great *Poet*, that applied himself much to any thing else.

But, says Sir William Temple, when I speak of *Poetry*, I mean not an *Ode* or an *Elegy*, a *Song* or a *Satyr*, nor by a *Poet* the *Composer* of any of *These*, but of a *just Poem* ; And after all I have said, 'tis no wonder, there should be so few have appeared, in any Parts or any Ages of the World, or that such as have, should be so much admir'd, and have almost *Divinity* ascrib'd to them, and to their Works. *Temple's Essay of Poetry*, pag. 15, 16, 17.

Dryden says, It is worth our consideration, a little to examine how much the *Hypercriticks* of *English Poetry* differ, in their dis-like of *Heroick Poetry*, from the Opinion of the *Greek* and *Latin* Judges of Antiquity ; from the *Italians* and *French* who have succeeded them ; and indeed, from the general taste and approbation of all Ages. *Heroick Poetry*, says *Dryden*, which they contemn, has ever been esteem'd, and ever will be, the greatest Work of *Humane Nature* : In that rank has *Aristotle* plac'd it ; and *Longinus* is so full of the

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the like Expressions, That he abundantly confirms the others Testimony. Horace as plainly delivers his Opinion, and particularly praises Homer in these Verses:

*Trojani Belli Scriptorem, maxime lollī,
Dum tu declamas Romæ, Prænestē relegi :
Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo & Crantore dicit.*

And in another place, modestly excluding himself from the Number of Poets, because he only writ *Odes* and *Satyrs*, he tells you a Poet is such an one,

— *Cui mens Divinior, atque os
Magna Sonaturum.*

Quotations, says Dryden, are superfluous in an Establish'd Truth ; otherwise I could reckon up amongst the Moderns, all the Italian Commentators on Aristotle's Book of Poetry ; amongst the French, the greatest in this Age, Boileau and Rapin : the latter of which is alone sufficient, were all other Criticks lost, to teach anew the Rules of Writing. Any Man, says Dryden, who will seriously consider the nature of an Epick Poem, how it agrees with that of Poetry in general, which is to instruct, and to delight ; what Actions it describes, and what Persons they are chiefly whom it informs ; will find it a Work, which indeed is full of difficulty in the Attempt, but admirable when 'tis well perform'd.
Dryd. *Apology for Heroick Poetry.*

Con-

Concerning the Elegy.

THE *Elegy*, says *Rapin*, by the quality of its name, is destin'd to *Tears* and *Complaints*: and therefore ought to be of a *doleful Character*. But afterwards it was us'd in subjects of *Tenderness*, as in *Love-Matters*, and the like. The *Latin*s have been more successful therein (by what appears to us) than the *Greeks*. For we have but little remaining of *Philetas* and *Tyrtæus*, who were famous in *Greece* for this kind of *Verse*. They who have writ *Elegy* best amongst the *Latin*s, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Aristot.* of *Poesie*, Part 2. Sect. xxix.

*Soft Elegy, design'd for Grief, and Tears,
Was first devis'd to grace some Mournful Hearse :
Since to a brisker Note 'tis taught to move,
And cloaths our gayest Passions, Joy and Love.
But, who was first Inventer of the Kind,
Criticks have sought, but never yet could find.*

Oldham, in *Imitat.* of *Horace's Art of Poetry*,
pag. 8.

*The Elegy, that loves a mournful Stile,
With unbound hair weeps at a Funeral Pile,
It paints the Lover's Torments, and Delights,
A Mistress Flatters, Threatens, and Invites :
But well these Raptures if you'll make us see,
You must know Love, as well as Poetry.
I hate those lukewarm Authors, whose forc'd Fire,
In a cold Stile, describes a hot Desire,*

That

That sigh by Rule, and raging in cold blood,
 Their sluggish Muse whip to an Amorous mood :
 Their feign'd Transports appear but flat and vain ;
 They always sigh, and always hug their Chain,
 Adore their Prison, and their Suff'ring's bless,
 Make Sense and Reason quarrel as they please.
 'Twas not of Old in this affected Tone
 That smooth Tibullus made his Amorous moan ;
 Nor Ovid, when, instructed from above,
 By Nature's Rules he taught the Art of Love.
 Boileau's Art of Poetry.

Their greatest fault who in this kind have writ,
 Is not defect in Words, nor want of Wit ;
 But should this Muse harmonious Numbers yield,
 And every Couplet be with Fancy fill'd,
 If yet a just Coherence be not made
 Between each Thought, and the whole Model laid
 So right, that every step may higher rise,
 Like goodly Mountains, till they reach the Skies ;
 Trifles like such perhaps of late have past,
 And may be lik'd a while, but never last ;
 'Tis Epigram, 'tis Point, 'tis what you will,
 But not an Elegy, nor writ with Skill,
 No * Panegyrick, nor a † Cooper's- Hill.

* Waller's, † Denham's.

Mulg. Essay on Poetry.

Rapin tells us, That the French distinguish not their Elegies from Heroick ; and that they call indifferently Elegy, what they please ; whereby the distinction of the true Character of this Verse seems not yet well establish'd among them.

Concerning the Pindarique Ode.

Rapin remarks, That the *Ode* ought to have as much Nobleness, Elevation, and Transport, as the *Eglogue* has of Simplicity and Modesty. 'Tis not only the *Wit* that heightens it, but likewise the *Matter*. For its use is to sing the Praises of the *Gods*, and to celebrate the Illustrious Actions of *Great Men*; so it requires, to sustain all the *Majesty* of its Character, an exalted Nature, a great *Wit*, a daring *Fancy*, an Expression Noble and Sparkling, yet pure and correct. All the briskness and life which Art has by its Figures, is not sufficient to heighten *Ode* so far as its Character requires. But the reading alone of *Pindar*, says Rapin, is more capable to inspire this *Genius*, than all my *Reflexions*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on Aristot. Treatise of Poesie, Part 2. Sect. xxx.*

*A higher flight, and of a happier Force
Are Odes, the Muses most unruly Horse ;
That bounds so fierce, the Rider has no rest,
But foams at Mouth, and moves like one possest.
The Poet here must be indeed inspired,
With Fury too, as well as Fancy fired.
Cowley might boast to have perform'd this Part,
Had He with Nature joyn'd the Rules of Art ;
But ill Expression gives sometimes Allay
To that rich Fancy, which can ne're decay :
Tho' all appear in Heat and Fury done,
The Language still must soft and easie run.
These Laws may seem a little too severe,
But Judgment yields, and Fancy governs there ;*

Which, though extravagant, this Muse allows,
And makes the Work much easier than it shows.
Mulg. Essay on Poetry.

Dryden observes to us, That the *Pindarique Verse* allows more Latitude than any other. Every one, says he, knows it was introduc'd into our Language, in this Age, by the happy Genius of Mr. Cowley. The seeming easiness of it, has made it spread; but it has not been consider'd enough, to be so well cultivated. It languishes in almost every hand but his, and some very few, whom (says Dryden, to keep the rest in Countenance) I do not name. He, indeed, has brought it as near perfection as was possible in so short a time. But if, says Dryden, I may be allow'd to speak my Mind modestly, and without injury to his Sacred Ashes, somewhat of the Purity of *English*, somewhat of more equal Thoughts, somewhat of sweetness in the *Numbers*, in one word, somewhat of a *finer turn* and more *Lyrical Verse* is yet wanting. As for the Soul of it, which consists in the Warmth and Vigor of Fancy, the Masterly Figures, and the Copiousness of Imagination, He has excell'd all others in this kind. Yet, says Dryden, if the Kind it self be capable of more Perfection, though rather in the *Ornamental* parts of it, than the *Essential*, what Rules of Morality or respect have I broken, in naming the Defects, that they may hereafter be amended? *Imitation* is a nice point, and there are few Poets who deserve to be *Models* in all they write. Since *Pindar* was the Prince of *Lyrick Poets*; let me, says Dryden, have leave to say, that in imitating him, our *Numbers* shou'd for the most part be *Lyrical*: for Variety, or rather where the Majesty of the Thought requires it, they may be stretch'd to the *English Heroick* of five Feet, and

and to the French *Alexandrine* of six. But the *Ear* must preside, and direct the Judgment to the choice of *Numbers*: Without the Nicety of this, the Harmony of *Pindarique Verse* can never be compleat; the cadency of one Line must be a Rule to that of the next; and the sound of the former must slide gently into that which follows; without leaping from one Extream into another. It must be done like the *Shadowings* of a *Picture*, which fall by degrees into a darker Colour. I shall be glad, says *Dryden*, if I have so explain'd my self as to be understood, but if I have not, *quod nequeo dicere & sententio tantum* must be my Excuse. There remains (says *Dryden*) much more to be said on this Subject; but to avoid envy, I will be silent: What I have said is the general Opinion of the best Judges, and in a manner has been forc'd from me, by seeing a noble sort of Poetry so happily restor'd by one Man, and so grossly Copied by almost all the rest: A *Musical Ear*, and a great *Genius*, if another Mr. *Cowley* cou'd arise, in another Age may bring it to perfection. *Dryd.*
Pref. to the 2d Part of Poetical Miscellanies.

Mr. *Norris* says, That the *Pindarick* is the highest and most Magnificent kind of Writing in Verse, and consequently fit only for great and noble Subjects, such as are as boundless as its own *Numbers*: The nature of which is to be loose and free, and not to keep one settled pace, but sometimes like a gentle Stream to glide along peaceably within its own Channel, and sometimes, like an impetuous Torrent, to roul on extravagantly, and carry all before it. *Norris's Miscellan.*
pag. 8.

Dr. *Sprat* says, That if the *Pindarique Verse* be disgusting to any, by reason of the *Irregularity* of its *Numbers*, they may observe, that this very thing makes

that kind of Poesie fit for all manner of Subjects: for the *Pleasant*, the *Grave*, the *Amorous*, the *Heroick*, the *Philosophical*, the *Moral*, and the *Divine*. Besides this they will find, that the frequent alteration of the *Rhime* and *Feet*, affects the Mind with a more various delight, while it is soon apt to be tir'd by the settled pace of any one constant Measure. But that for which (says Dr. *Sprat*) I think this *inequality* of *Number* chiefly to be preferr'd, is its nearer affinity to *Prose*: from which all other Kinds of *English Verse* are so far distant, that it is very seldom found, that the same Man excels in both ways. But now this loose and *unconfin'd Measure*, has all the Grace and Harmony of the most *Confin'd*. And withal, it is so large and free, that the practice of it will only exalt, not corrupt our *Prose*: which is certainly the most useful kind of Writing of all others: for it is the Stile of all Business and Conversation.

Sprat in Cowley's Life.

Cowley, in his Preface, tells us, That though the *Liberty* of *Pindarique Verse*, may incline a Man to believe it easie to be compos'd, yet the Undertaker will find it otherwise.

Horace, who propos'd the *Odes* of *Pindar* for the Model of those he writ in *Latin*, quitted immediately the *Numbers* and the *turn* of that Author's Verse, of which he found the *Latin Tongue* uncapable.

Con-

Concerning Songs or Sonnets, Ma-
drigals, Rondelays, &c.

Rapin tells us, That the *Character* of the *smaller Verse*, and of all the little Works of *Poetry*, requires that they be *Natural*; together with a *Delicacy*; for seeing the *little Subjects* afford no *Beauty* of themselves, the *Wit* of the *Poet* must supply that want out of its own Stock. The *Sonnet*, says Rapin, is of a *Character* that may receive more of *Greatness* in its Expression, than the other little Pieces; but nothing is more Essential to it, than the happy and natural turn of the *Thought* that composes it. Now, says Rapin, it is proper to know what this *Delicacy* is, that ought to be the *Character* of the *smaller Verse*, or the little Works of *Poetry*, that so we may understand all that belongs to them. A *Word* may be *delicate* several ways; either by a *subtle Equivocation*, which contains a *Mystery* in the *Ambiguity*; or by a *hidden Meaning*, which speaks all out, whilst it pretends to say nothing; or by some fierce and *bold Stroke* under *Modest Terms*; or by something *brisk* and *pleasant*, under a *serious Air*; or, lastly, by some *fine Thought*, under a *simple* and *homey Expression*. We find, says Rapin, all these sorts of *Delicacy* in some of the *Ancients*, as in the *Socrates* of *Plato*, in *Sappho*, in *Theocritus*, in *Anacreon*, in *Horace*, in *Catullus*, in *Petronius*, and in *Martial*. These are all great *Models* of this *Character*; of which the *French* have only in their Tongue *Marot*, Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber to *Francis the First*. He had an admirable *Genius* for this way of Writing; and whoever have

have been successful in it since, have only Copied him. *Voiture*, says *Rapin*, had a Genius for this Character ; if he had not a little corrupted his Wit by the reading of the Spaniards and Italians. If these Words are affected, they lose their Grace, because they become cold and flat, when they are far-fetch'd. But the most general fault in these little Pieces of Poetry, is, when one would cram them with too much Wit. This is the ordinary Vice of the Spaniards and Italians, who labour always to say things finely. But this (says *Rapin*) is no very good Character ; for they cease to be Natural, whilst they take care to be Witty. *Rap.* *Reflex.* &c. Part 2d. Sect. xxxii.

*A faultless Sonnet, finish'd well, would be
Worth tedious Volumes of loose Poetry.*

*A hundred Scribbling Authors, without ground
Believe they have this only Phœnix found :
When yet th' exactest scarce have two or three
Among whole Tomes, from Faults and Censure free.
The rest, but little read, regarded less,
Are shovel'd to the Pastry from the Press.
Closing the Sense within the measur'd time,
'Tis hard to fit the Reason to the Rhime.*

*Boileau's Art of Poetry, English'd by Sir Will.
Soame.*

*First then of Songs, which now so much abound,
Without his Song no Fop is to be found,
A most Offensive Weapon which he draws
On all he meets against Apollo's Laws :
Tho' nothing seems more easie, yet no part
Of Poetry requires a nicer Art :*

For as in rows of richest Pearl there lies
 Many a Blemish that escapes our Eyes,
 The least of which Defects is plainly shown
 In some small Ring, and brings the Value down;
 So Songs should be to just Perfection wrought; }
 Yet where can we see one without a fault; }
 Exact Propriety of Words and Thought? }
 Expression easie, and the Fancy high,
 Yet that not seem to creep, nor this to fly;
 No Words transpos'd, but in such Order all,
 As, tho' hard wrought, may seem by chance to fall.
 Here, as in all things else, is most unsit
 Bare Ribaldry, that poor Pretence to Wit.
 Not that warm Thoughts of the transporting Joy,
 Can shock the Chasteſt, or the niceſt Cloy;
 But Obscene Words, too gross to move Desire,
 Like heaps of Fewel do but choak the Fire.

Mulgr. Essay on Poetry.

Concerning the Epigram.

RApin remarks, That the *Epigram*, of all the Works in Verse that Antiquity has produc'd, is the least considerable, yet this too has its Beauty. This Beauty consists either in the delicate *turn*, or in a *lucky Word*. The Greeks have understood this sort of *Poësie* otherwise than the *Latins*. The Greek *Epigram* runs upon the *turn* of a Thought that is natural, but fine and subtle. The Latin *Epigram*, by a false taste that sway'd in the beginning of the decay of the pure Latin Stile, endeavours

vours to surprise the Mind by some nipping *Word*, which is call'd a *Point*. *Catullus* writ after the former manner, which is of a finer Character; for he endeavours to close a Natural Thought within a delicate turn of Words, and within the Simplicity of a very soft Expression. *Martial*, says *Rapin*, was in some manner the Author of this other way, that is to say, to terminate an ordinary thought by some *Word* that is surprising. After all, Men of a good taste, preferr'd the way of *Catullus*, before that of *Martial*; there being more of true delicacy in that, than in this. And in these latter Ages, says *Rapin*, we have seen a Noble *Venetian*, named *Andreas Naugerius*, who had an exquisite discernment, and who, by a natural Antipathy against all that which is called *Point*, which he judg'd to be of an ill relish, Sacrific'd every year in Ceremony a Volume of *Martial's Epigrams* to the *Manes* of *Catullus*, in Honour to his Character, which he judg'd was to be preferr'd to that of *Martial*. In conclusion, *Rapin* tells us, that the *Epigram* is a sort of *Verse*, in which a Man has little Success; for it is a meer lucky hit, if it prove well; and an *Epigram*, unless it be admirable, is little worth; and it is so rare to make them admirable, that 'tis well if a Man can make one in his whole life time. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Aristot.* *Treatise of Poesie*, Part 2. Sect. xxxi.

The Epigram, with little Art compos'd,
Is one good Sentence in a Distich clos'd.
These Points, that by Italians first were priz'd,
Our Ancient Authors knew not, or despis'd.

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag 21.

Sir William Temple says, There were (indeed) certain *Fairies* in the old Regions of Poetry, called *Epigrams*, which

which seldom reached above the Stature of Two, or Four, or Six Lines, and which being so short, were all turned upon *Conceit*, or some sharp Hits of Fancy or Wit. The only Ancient of this kind among the *Latins*, were the *Priapeia*, which were little *Voluntaries* or *Extemporaries*, written upon the ridiculous Wooden Statues of *Priapus*, among the Gardens of *Rome*. In the decays of the *Roman Learning* and *Wit*, as well as *Language*; *Martial*, *Ausonius*, and others, fell into this Vein, and applied it indifferently to *all Subjects* which was before Restrained to *one*, and drest it something more cleanly than it was Born. This Vein of *Conceit*, says *Temple*, seem'd proper for such *Scraps* or *Splinters*, into which *Poetry* was broken, and was so eagerly followed, as almost to over-run all that was composed in our several *Modern Languages*; The *Italian*, the *French*, the *Spanish* as well as *English*, were for a great while full of nothing else but *Conceit*: It was an *Ingredient*, that gave taste to Compositions which had little of themselves; 'twas a *Sauce* that gave Point to Meat that was flat, and some Life to Colours that were fading; And in short, Those who could not furnish *Spirit*, supplied it with this *Salt*, which may preserve Things or Bodies that are Dead; but is for ought I know, of little use to the Living, or necessary to Meats that have much or pleasing Tastes of their own. However it were, this Vein first over-flow'd our *Modern Poetry*, and with so little distinction, or judgment, that we would have *Conceit* as well as *Rhime* in every two Lines, and run through all our long Scribbles as well as the Short, and the whole Body of the Poem, whatever it is: This was just as if a Building should be nothing but *Ornament*, or *Cloaths* nothing but

Trimming; as if a Face should be cover'd over with black Patches, or a Gown with Spangles, which is all I shall say of it. *Temple's Essay of Poetry*, pag. 48, 49.

Concerning Burlesque.

*S*ir William Temple observes to us, That one Vein which has enter'd and helpt to corrupt our Modern Poesie, is that of *Ridicule*, as if nothing pleas'd but what made one laugh; which yet comes from two very different Affections of the Mind; for as Men have no disposition to laugh at things they are most pleas'd with, so they are very little pleas'd with many things they laugh at. But this mistake is very general, and such Modern Poets, as found no better way of pleasing, thought they could not fail of it, by *Ridiculing*. This was encourag'd by finding Conversation run so much into the same Vein, and the Wits in Vogue to take up with that part of it, which was formerly left to those that were call'd *Fools*, and were used in great Families, only to make the Company laugh. What Opinion the Romans had of this Character, appears in those Lines of Horace:

— *Absentem qui rodit amicum,
Qui non defendit alio culpante, Solutos
Qui coptat risus Hominum, famamq; dicacis,
Fingere qui non visa potest, Commissa tacere
Qui nequit, Hic Niger est, Hunc tu Romane Caveto.*

And

And 'tis pity, says *Temple*, the *Character of a Wit*, in one Age, should be so like that of a *Black* in another.

This Vein of *Burlesque*, or *Ridiculing*, began first in Verse, with an *Italian Poem*, called *La Secchia Rapita*, was pursued by *Scarron* in *French*, with his *Virgil Travesty*, and in *English* by Sir *John Mince*, *Hudibras*, and *Cotton*, and with greater height of *Burlesque* in the *English*, than I think in any other Language. But (says Sir *William Temple*) let the Execution, be what it will, the Design, the Custom, and Example are very pernicious to *Poetry*, and indeed, to all Virtue and good Qualities among Men, which must be dishearten'd, by finding how unjustly and undistinguish'd they fall under the lash of *Raillery*, and this Vein of *Ridiculing* the Good as well as the Ill, the Guilty and the Innocent together. 'Tis a very poor, though common pretence to *Merit*, to make it appear by the Faults of other Men. A mean Wit or Beauty may pass in a Room, where the rest of the Company are allowed to have none; 'tis something to sparkle among *Diamonds*; but to shine among *Pebbles*, is neither Credit nor Value worth the pretending. Sir *Will. Temple's* *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 49, &c.

*The dull Burlesque appear'd with impudence,
And pleas'd by Novelty, in spite of Sence.
All, except trivial Points, grew out of date;
Parnassus spoke the Cant of Belinsgate:
Boundless and Mad, disorder'd Rhime was seen:
Disguis'd Apollo chang'd to Harlequin.
This Plague, which first in Country Towns began,
Cities and Kingdoms quickly over-ran;
The dullest Scribblers some Admirers found,
And the Mock-Tempest was a while renown'd:*

But this low Stuff the Town at last despis'd,
 And scorn'd the Folly that they once had priz'd ;
 Distinguish'd Dull, from Natural and Plain,
 And left the Villages to Fleckno's Reign.
 Let not so mean a Stile your Muse debase ;
 But learn from Butler the Buffooning Grace :
 And let Burlesque in Ballads be employ'd ;
 Yet noisie Bumbast carefully avoid.

Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 5, 6.

Rimer tells us, That among the French, not many years since, was observ'd a most vicious Appetite, and immoderate Passion for Burlesque. Which sort of Verse had been currant in Italy an Hundred years, before e're they pass'd to this side the Alps ; but when once they had their turn in France, so right to their humour, they over-ran all ; nothing Wise or Sober could stand in their way. All were possess'd with the Spirit of Burlesque, from Doll in the Dairy, to the Matrons at Court, and Maids of Honour. Nay, says Rimer, so far went the Frenzy, that no Bookseller would meddle on any terms without Burlesque ; insomuch that Ann. 1649, was at Paris Printed a serious Treatise with this Title,

— *La Passion de nostre Seigneur, En vers Burlesques.*
Rimer's Short view of Tragedy, Chap. 1.

The Burlesque Verse, consisting of Eight Syllables or Four Feet, is that which our Excellent Hudibras has chosen. The worth of his Poem, says Dryden, is too well known to need my Commendation, and he is above my Censure : His Satyr is of the Varronian kind, though

though unmix'd with *Prose*. The choice of his *Numbers* is suitable enough to his Design, as he has manag'd it. But in any other Hand, the shortness of his Verse, and the quick returns of Rhime, says *Dryden*, had debas'd the Dignity of Stile. And besides, the double Rhime (a necessary Companion of *Burlesque writing*) is not so proper for Manly *Satyr*, for it turns earnest too much to *Fest*, and gives us a Boyish kind of Pleasure. It tickles awkwardly, with a kind of pain, to the best sort of Readers; we are pleas'd ungratefully, and, if I may say so, against our liking. We thank him not for giving us that unseasonable Delight, when we know he cou'd have given us a better, and more solid. He might have left that Task to others, who not being able to put in Thought, can only make us grin with the Excrescence of a Word of two or three Syllables in the close. 'Tis indeed, says *Dryden*, below so great a Master to make use of such a little Instrument. But his good Sense is perpetually shining through all he writes; it affords us not the time of finding Faults: We pass through the levity of his *Rhime*, and are immediately carried into some admirable useful Thought. After all, says *Dryden*, he has chosen this kind of *Verse*; and has written the best in it: And had he taken another, he would always have excell'd.

Dryden does here also declare, That for his part, he prefers the *Verse of Ten Syllables*, which we call the *English Heroique*, to that of *Eight*. For, says he, this sort of *Number* is more Roomy. The Thought can turn it self with greater ease, in a larger compass. When the *Rhime* comes too thick upon us, it streightens the Expression; we are thinking of the close, when we should be employ'd in adorning the Thought. It makes a *Poet* giddy with turning in a Space too narrow for his *Imagination*. He loses many Beauties without

without gaining one Advantage; for, says *Dryden*, a *Burlesque Rhime*, I have already concluded to be none; or if it were, 'tis more easily purchas'd in *Ten Syllables*, than in *Eight*: In both Occasions, says *Dryden*, 'tis as in a *Tennis-Court*, where the strokes of greater force are given, when we strike out, and play at length. *Tassone* and *Boileau* have left us the best Examples of this way, in the *Secchia Rapita*, and the *Lutrin*. And next them, *Merlin Coccajus* in his *Baldus*. *Dryd.* Dedic. before the Translat. of Juvenal, pag. 48, 49.

The Grace and Beauties of *Burlesque* do chiefly consist in a disproportion between the *Stile* in which we speak of a thing, and its true *Idea*: This is the distinguishing Mark of *French* and *Italian Burlesque*, of which there seems to be two sorts; as when low and mean Expressions are us'd to represent the greatest Events, as in *Scarron's Virgil-Travesty*; or great and lofty Terms to describe Common Things, as in *Boileau's Lutrin*, and *Tassone's Secchia Rapita*. Good Sense and Manners ought to be preserv'd, or *Burlesque* dwindleth to Buffoonry, and the Dialect of the *Mob*. As for the way of describing small things in pompous terms, though it admits of more Sense and fine Expressions, and is also for some time pleasant to the Reader, by the Air of Gravity and ridiculous Affectation, with which Trifles are related as mighty Matters; yet, says my *Author*, he soon grows weary with it, as with most long-winded Poems; and if any will read over *Tassone*, though some things will extreamly delight him, I doubt not, says the same *Author*, but that he will find this true. *Pet. Motteux in the Gentleman. Journ. January, 1693.*

Concerning Lampoons.

Dryden remarks, That that sort of *Satyr*, which is known in *England* by the name of *Lampoon*, is a dangerous sort of Weapon, and for the most part unlawful. We have no Moral right on the Reputation of other Men. 'Tis taking from them, what we cannot restore to them. How remote (says Dryden) are for the most part these *Lamponers*, in common justice, from the choice of such Persons as are the proper Subject of *Satyr*! And how little Wit they bring, for the Support of their Injustice! The weaker Sex is their most Ordinary Theme: And the Best and Fairest are sure to be the most severely handled. Amongst Men, those who are prosperously unjust, are intituled to a *Panegyrick*. But afflicted Virtue is insolently stabb'd with all manner of Reproaches. No Decency is consider'd, no Falsomness omitted; no Venom is wanting, as far as Dullness can supply it. For there is a perpetual Dearth of Wit; a Barrenness of good Sense and Entertainment. The neglect of the Readers, will soon put an end to this sort of Scribbling. There can be no Pleasantry where there is no Wit: No Impression can be made, where there is no Truth for the Foundation.

Dryd. Dedic. before the Translat. of Juvenal, pag. 35, 36.

Tet these are Pearls to your Lampooning Rhimes,
I' abuse your selves more duly than the Times.
Scandal, the Glory of the English Nation,
Is worn to Raggs, and scribbld out of Fashion.
Such harmles Thrusts, as if, like Fencers wife,
They had agreed their Play before their Prize:

Faith,

Faith, they may hang their Harps upon the Willows,
'Tis just like Children when they box with Pillows.

Dryd. in an Epilogue. See *Miscellan. Poems*,
pag. 294.

Our Poet has a different Taste of Wit,
Nor will to common Vogue himself submit.
Let some admire the Fops, whose Talents lie
In venting dull insipid Blasphemy;
He swears, he cannot with those Terms dispence,
Nor will be damn'd for the repute of Sense.
Wit's Name was never to Prophaneness due,
For then you see he could be Witty too:
He could Lampoon the State, and Libel Kings,
But that he's Loyal, and knows better things,
Than Fame, whose guilty Birth from Treason springs. }
He likes not Wit, which can't a Licence claim,
To which the Author dares not set his Name.
Wit should be open, court each Reader's Eye,
Not lurk in fly unprinted Privacy.
But Criminal Writers, like dull Birds of Night,
For Weakness, or for Shame, avoid the Light;
May such a Jury for their Audience have,
And from the Bench, not Pit, their Doom receive.
May they the Tow'r for their due Merits share,
And a just Wreath of Hemp, not Laurel wear.
Joh. Oldham, pag. 112. the 3d Edition.

I love sharp Satyr, from Obsceneness free;
Not Impudence, that Preaches Modesty:
Our English, who in Malice never fail,
Hence, in Lampoons and Libels, learnt to Rail;
Pleasant Detraction, that by Singing goes
From Mouth to Mouth, and as it Marches grows!

Our

Our freedom in our Poetry we see,
That Child of Joy, begot by Liberty.

Sir Will: Soame, in his Translat. of Boileau's
Art of Poetry, pag. 25, 26.

Concerning the English Poetry; and their Language in relation to Po- etry.

M R. Rimer can by no means allow of the reason, which Sir Philip Sidney gives, why Poets are less esteem'd in England, than in the other famous Nations, to bewant of Merit: Nor is he of their Opinion, who say, that Wit and Wine are not of the growth of our Country. Valour they allow us; but what we gain by our Arms, we lose by the Weakness of our Heads: Our good Ale, and English Beef, they say, may make us Soul-ders; but are no very good Friends to Speculation. But, says Rimer, were it proper here to handle this Argument, and to make Comparisons with our Neighbours, it might easily, by our Poetry, be evinc'd, that our Wit was never inferiour to theirs; though, perhaps, our Honesty made us worse Politicians. Wit and Valour have always gone together, and Poetry has been the Companion of Camps. The Heroe and Poet were inspir'd with the same Enthusiasm, acted with the same heat, and Both were crown'd with the same Laurel. Had our Tongue, says Rimer, been as generally known, and those who felt our blows, understood our Lan-

M guage;

guage; they would confess, that our Poets had likewise done their part, and that our Pens had been as successful as our Swords. And certainly, if Sir Philip Sidney had seen the Poets, who succeeded him, he would not have judg'd the English less deserving than their Neighbours. *Rimer in the Pref. to his Translat. of Rapin.*

*Above our Neighbours our Conceptions are,
But faultleſs Writing is th' Effect of Care.
Our Lines reform'd, and not compos'd in haste ;
Polish'd like Marble, wou'd like Marble last.
But as the present, so the last Age writ ;
In both we find like Negligence and Wit.
Were we but leſs indulgent to our Faults,
And Patience had to cultivate our Thoughts ;
Our Muse would flourish, and a Nobler Rage
Would honour this, than did the Grecian Stage.*

Edm. Waller's Prologue to the Maids Tragedy.

Rimer says, That he presumes Rapin did not understand our Language well enough, to pass a Judgment on the English Poets: only in general he confesses, that we have a Genius for Tragedy above all other People; One reason he gives, we cannot allow of, viz. *The disposition of our Nation, which, he saith, is delighted with cruel things.* 'Tis ordinary, says Rimer, to judge of Peoples Manners and Inclinations, by their publick Diversions; and therefore Travellers, who see some of our Tragedies, may indeed conclude us the cruellest minded People in Christendom.

In another place Rapin says of us, That we are *Men in an Island, divided from the rest of the World, and that*

that we love Blood in our Sports. And, perhaps, says Rimer, it may be true, that on our Stage are more Murders, than on all the Theatres in Europe. And they who have not time to learn our Language, or be acquainted with our Conversation, may there in three hours time behold so much Bloodshed, as may affright them from the inhospitable Shore, as from the Cyclops Den. Let our Tragedy-Makers then consider this, and examine whether it be the Disposition of the People, or their own Caprice, that brings this Censure on the best natur'd Nation under the Sun. *Rimer's Pref. to the Translat. of Rapin.*

Dryden tells us, He cannot grant, that the French Dramatick Writers excel the English. Our Authors, says he, as far surpass them in Genius, as our Soldiers excel theirs in Courage: 'Tis true, in Conduct they surpass us either way: Yet that proceeds not so much from their greater Knowledge, as from the difference of Tasts in the two Nations. They content themselves with a thin Design, without Episodes, and manag'd by few Persons. Our Audience will not be pleas'd, but with variety of Accidents, an Underplot, and many Actors. They follow the Ancients too servilely, in the Mechanick Rules, and we assume too much Licence to our selves, in keeping them only in view, at too great a distance. But, says Dryden, if our Audience had their Tasts, our Poets could more easily comply with them, than the French Writers cou'd come up to the Sublimity of our Thoughts, or to the difficult variety of our Designs. *Dryd.*, in his Dedic. before the Examen Poëticum.

But who did ever in French Authors see
The Comprehensive English Energy?

*The weighty Bullion of one Sterling Line,
Drawn to French Wire, would through whole Pages shine.
I speak my private, but impartial Sense,
With Freedom, and (I hope) without Offence :
For I le Recant, when France can shew me Wit,
As strong as ours, and as succinctly writ.*

Roscommon's Essay on Translated Verse.

Sir William Temple remarks, That among the many Decays of Poetry, there is yet one sort, that seems to have succeeded much better with our Moderns, than any of the rest, which is Dramatick, or that of the Stage : In this the *Italian*, the *Spanish*, and the *French*, have all had their different Merit, and received their just Applauses. Yet I am deceiv'd, says Temple, if our *English* has not in some kind excell'd both the *Modern* and the *Ancient*; which has been by force of a *Vein* Natural perhaps to our Countrey, and which with us, is called *Humour*; a Word peculiar to our Language, and hard to be express'd in any other; nor is it (that I know of) found in any Forreign Writers, unless it be *Moliere*, and yet his has too much of the *Farce*, to pass for the same with ours. *Shakespear* was the first that open'd this *Vein* upon our *Stage*, which has run so freely and so pleasantly ever since, that, says Temple, I have often wonder'd, to find it appear so little upon any other; being a Subject so proper for them, since *Humour* is but a Picture of particular Life, as *Comedy* is of general; and though it represents Dispositions and Customs less Common, yet they are not less Natural than those that are more frequent among Men; for if *Humour* it self be forc'd, it loses all the Grace; which has been indeed the fault of some of our Poets most celebrated in this Kind.

It may seem a Defect (says *Temple*) in the *Ancient Stage*, that the *Characters* introduc'd were so few, and those so common, as a Covetous old Man, an Amorous young Man, a Witty Wench, a Crafty Slave, a Bragging Souldier: The Spectators met nothing upon the Stage, but what they met in the Streets, and at every Turn. All the *Variety* is drawn only from different and uncommon Events; whereas if the *Characters* are so too, the Diversity and the Pleasure must needs be the more. But as of most general Customs in a Country, there is usually some Ground, from the Nature of the People or the Clymat, so there may be amongst us, for this *Vein* of our Stage, and a greater *Variety* of *Humour* in the *Picture*, because there is a greater *Variety* in the *Life*. This may proceed (says *Temple*) from the Native Plenty of our Soil, the unequalness of our Clymat, as well as the ease of our Government, and the Liberty of Professing Opinions and Factions, which perhaps our Neighbours may have about them, but are forced to disguise, and thereby they may come in time to be extinguish'd. Plenty begets Wantonness and Pride, Wantonness is apt to *Invent*, and Pride scorns to *Imitate*; Liberty begets Stomach or Heart, and Stomach will not be constrained. Thus we come to have more *Originals*, and more that appear what they are, we have more *Humour*, because every Man follows his own, and takes a Pleasure, perhaps a Pride, to shew it. On the contrary, where the People are generally Poor, and forced to hard Labour, their Actions and Lives are all of a piece; where they serve hard Masters, they must follow his Examples as well as Commands, and are forced upon Imitation in small Matters, as well as Obedience in great: So that some Nations look as if they were cast all by one Mould,

or

or cut out all by one Pattern, (at least the Common People in one, and the Gentlemen in another): They seem all of a sort in their Habits, their Customs, and even their Talk and Conversation, as well as in the Application and Pursuit of their Actions and their Lives.

Besides all this, there is another sort of *Variety* amongst us, which arises from our *Clymat*, and the Dispositions it naturally produces. We are not only more unlike one another, than any Nation I know, says Sir *William Temple*, but we are more unlike our selves too, at several times, and owe to our very Air some ill Qualities, as well as many good: We may allow some Distempers incident to our *Clymat*, since so much Health, Vigour, and length of Life have been generally ascribed to it; for among the *Greek* and *Roman* Authors themselves, we shall find the *Britains* observ'd, to live the longest, and the *Ægyptians* the shortest, of any Nations that were known in those Ages. Besides, I think, says *Temple*, none will dispute the Native Courage of our Men, and Beauty of our Women, which may be elsewhere as great in *Particulars*, but no where so in *General*; they may be (what is said of Diseases) as *A-cute* in other places, but with us they are *Epidemical*. For my own part, says Sir *William Temple*, I have conversed much with Men of other Nations, and such as have been both in great Employments and Esteem, and I can say very impartially, that I have not observ'd among any, so much true *Genius* as among the *English*; no where more Sharpness of Wit, more Pleasantness of *Humour*, more Range of Fancy, more Penetration of Thought or Depth of Reflexion among the better Sort: No where more Goodness of Nature and of Meaning, nor more Plainness of Sense and of Life, than among the

the common sort of Country People, nor more blunt Courage and Honesty, than among our Sea-Men. But with all this, our Country must be confess, to be what a great Foreign Physician call'd it, *The Region of Spleen*, which may arise a good deal from the great Uncertainty, and many sudden Changes of our Weather in all Seasons of the Year: And how much these affect the Heads and Hearts, especially of the finest Tempers, is hard to be believ'd by Men, whose Thoughts are not turned to such Speculations. This (says Temple) makes us unequal in our *Humours*, inconstant in our Passions, uncertain in our Ends, and even in our Desires. But what effect soever such a Composition may have upon our Lives or our Government, it must needs have a good one upon our *Stage*, and has given admirable Play to our Comical Wits. So that, in my Opinion, says Temple, there is no *Vein* of that sort, either *Ancient* or *Modern*, which excels or equals the *Humour* of our Plays. Sir Will. Temple's *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 53, 54, &c.

That the *English Drama* is of late very much improved, appears by these following Lines;

At first the Musick of our Stage was rude,
Whilst in the Cock-Pit and Black-Friers it stood:
And this might please enough in former Reigns,
A thrifty, thin, and basf'ul Audience:
When Buff'y d'Ambois and his Fustian took,
And Men were ravish'd with Queen Gordobuc.
But since our Monarch, by kind Heaven sent,
Brought back the Arts with him from Banishment,
And by his gentle Influence gave increase
To all the harmless Luxuries of Peace:

Favour'd by him, our Stage has flourish'd too,
 And every day in outward Splendor grew:
 In Musick, Song, and Dance of every kind,
 And all the Grace of Action 'tis refin'd;
 And since that Opera's at length came in,
 Our Players have so well improv'd the Scene
 With Gallantry of Habit, and Machine,
 As makes our Theatre in Glory vie
 With the best Ages of Antiquity:
 And mighty Roscius, were he living now,
 Would envy both our Stage, and Acting too.

{

Oldham, in Imitat. of Horace's Art of Poetry,
 pag. 18, 19.

They who have best succeeded on the Stage,
 Have still conform'd their Genius to their Age.
 Thus Johnson did Mechanick Humour show,
 When Men were dull, and Conversation low.
 Then, Comedy was faultless, but 'twas coarse :
 Cobb's Tankard was a Jest, and Otter's Horse.
 And as their Comedy, their Love was mean :
 Except, by chance, in some one labour'd Scene,
 Which must atone for an ill-written Play.
 They rose; but at their height could seldom stay.
 Fame then was cheap, and the first Comer sped ;
 And they have kept it since, by being dead.
 But were they now to write when Criticks weigh
 Each Line, and ev'ry Word, throughout a Play,
 None of 'em, no not Johnson, in his height
 Could pass, without allowing Grains for weight.
 Think it not envy that these Truths are told,
 Our Poet's not malicious, though he's bold.
 'Tis not to brand 'em, that their Faults are shown,
 But, by their Errors, to excuse his own.

If

If Love and Honour now are higher rais'd,
 'Tis not the Poet, but the Age is prais'd.
 Wit's now arriv'd to a more high degree ;
 Our native Language more refid and free.
 Our Ladies and our Men now speak more Wit
 In Conversation, than those Poets writ.

Dryd, Epilogue to the 2d Part of Granada.

Dryden tells us, That Johnson, Fletcher, and Shakespeare, are honour'd, and almost ador'd by us, as they deserve; Neither do I know (says he) any so presumptuous of themselves as to contend with them; Yet give me leave to say thus much, without Injury to their Ashes, that not only we shall never equal them, but they could never equal themselves, were they to rise and write again. We acknowledge them our Fathers in Wit, says Dryden, but they have ruin'd their Estates themselves before they came to their Childrens Hands. There is scarce an Humour, a Character, or any kind of Plot, which they have not us'd. All comes fyllied or wasted to us : and were they to entertain this Age, they could not now make so plenteous Treatments out of such decay'd Fortunes. This therefore will be a good Argument to us, either not to write at all, or to attempt some other way. There is no Bays (says Dryden) to be expected in their Walks; Tentanda via est quâ me quoque possum tollere humo.

This way of Writing in Verse, says Dryden, they have only left free to us; our Age is arriv'd to a perfection in it, which they never knew; and which (if we may guess by what of theirs we have seen in Verse ; as the *Faithful Shepherdess*, and *Sad Shepherd*;) 'tis probable they never could have reach'd. For the Genius of every Age is different ; and though ours ex-

cel in this, I deny not, says Dryden, but that to imitate Nature in that Perfection which they did in Prose, is a greater Commendation, than to write in Verse exactly. Dryd. *Essay of Dram. Poesie*, pag. 45, 46.

Rimer lays, He fears what Quintilian pronounced concerning the Roman Comedy, may as justly be said of English Tragedy: *In Tragœdiâ maximè claudicamus, via levem consequimur Umbram*: In Tragedy we come short extreamly. We have hardly any Shadow of it. Rimer's Short view of Tragedy, pag. 85.

Dr. Burnet, the present Bishop of Salisbury, remarks, That the English Language has wrought it self out, both of the fulsome Pedantry, under which it labour'd long ago, and the trifling way of dark and unintelligible Wit, that came after that, and out of the course Extravagance of Canting that succeeded this: But as one Extream commonly produces another, so we were beginning to fly into a Sublime pitch, of a strong but false Rhetorick, which had much corrupted, not only the Stage, but even the Pulpit; two places, that though they ought not to be named together, much less to resemble one another; yet (says Burnet) it cannot be denied, but the Rule and Measure of Speech is generally taken from them: but that florid Strain is almost quite worn out, and is become now as ridiculous as it was once admired. So that without either the Expence or Labour that the French have undergone, our Language has, like a rich Wine, wrought out its Tartar, and is insensibly brought to a Purity that could not have been compassed without much Labour; had it not been for the great advantage we have of a Prince [Charles the 2d.] who is so great a Judge, that his single approbation or dislike, says Burnet, has almost as great an Authority over our Language, as his Prerogative gives him over our

our Coin. We are now so much refin'd, that how defective soever our Imaginations or Reasonings may be, yet our *Language*, says *Burnet*, has fewer faults, and is more natural and proper, than it was ever at any time before. When one compares the best Writers of the last Age, with those that excel in this, the difference is very discernable: even the great Sir *Francis Bacon*, that was the first that writ our *Language* correctly, as he is still our best Author, yet in some places has Figures so strong, that they could not pass now before a severe Judge. I will not (says *Burnet*) provoke the present Masters of the Stage, by preferring the Authors of the last Age to them: for though they all acknowledge that they come far short of *Ben. Johnson*, *Beaumont*, and *Fletcher*, yet I believe they are better pleas'd to say this themselves, than to have it observ'd by others. Their *Language* is now certainly properer, and more natural than it was formerly, chiefly since the Correction that was given by the *Rehearsal*, writ by the late *Duke of Buckingham*; And it is to be hoped, says *Burnet*, that the *Essay on Poetry*, [writ by the *Earl of Mulgrave*,] which may be well matched with the best Pieces of its kind that even *Augustus's* Age produced, will have a more powerful Operation, if clear Sense, joyned with home but gentle Reproofs, can work more on our Writers, than that unmerciful exposing them has done. *Gilb. Burnet's Pref. to his Translat. of Sir Tho. More's Utopia.*

I am sorry, says *Dryden*, that (speaking so Noble a *Language* as we do) we have not a more certain Measure of it, as they have in *France*, where they have an *Academy* erected for that purpose, and endow'd with large Priviledges by the present King. I wish, says *Dryden*, we might at length leave to borrow words from

ther Nations, which is now a *Wantonness* in us, not a *Necessity*; but so long as some affect to speak them; there will not want others, who will have the boldness to write them. *Dryd.* Dedic. to the E. of Orrery before the Rival-Ladies.

It would mortifie an *English* Man, to consider, that from the time of *Boccace*, and of *Petrarch*, the *Italian Language* has varied very little: And that the *English* of *Chaucer* their Contemporary, is not to be understood without the help of an old *Dictionary*. But their *Goth* and *Vandal* had the Fortune to be grafted on a *Roman Stock*: Ours has the disadvantage to be founded on the *Dutch*. We are full of *Monosyllables*, and those clog'd with *Consonants*; and our *Pronunciation* is effeminate. All which are Enemies to a sounding *Language*: 'Tis true, that to supply our Poverty, we have traffick'd with our Neighbour Nations; by which means we abound as much in *Words*, as *Amsterdam* does in *Religions*; but to order them, and make them useful after their admission is the difficulty! A greater Progress has been made in this, since his Majesty's *Return*, than perhaps since the *Conquest* to his time. But the better part of the Work remains unfinish'd: And that which has been done already, since it has only been in the Practice of some few Writers, must be digested into Rules and Method; before it can be profitable to the General. *Dryd.* Dedic. to the E. of Sunderland before *Troilus and Cressida*.

Our *Language* is both *Copious*, *Significant*, and *Majestical*; and might be reduc'd into a more harmonious Sound. But for want of Publick Encouragement, in this *Iron Age*, we are so far from making any Progress in the improvement of our Tongue, that in few years, we

we shall speak and write as Barbarously as our Neighbours. *Dixd.* Dedic. to the Lord Radcliffe, before Exam'en Poëticum.

Rapin says, That the English Language is proper for great Expressions. *Reflex. on Aristot. Part 2. Sect. 23.*

Concerning the Italian and Spanish Poetry; and their Languages in relation to Poetry.

RIMER tells us, That in the beginning of the last Century, when People began to open their Eyes, and look farther into the Matters of Religion and good Literature, Italy had much the start and advantage of the rest of Europe; thither were Aristotle's Works first brought a-shore; and there were they Translated, Conn'd, and Commented by the chiefest Wits amongst them. And above all, his *Poetica* engag'd their utmost care and application.

So many Comments had they made, and so many Critical Observations, before, on this side the Alps, any thing in that way was understood, that they began to lay it down for a truth, That the Tramontans had no Gusto. *Oltramontani*, says one of them, *non sono Zelanti delle buone Regole de Greci, & de Latini.* They make no Conscience of breaking the good Laws of the Greeks and Latins.

Others undertook to put in Practice, and write by his Principles and Direction. *Bibiena* (afterwards a Cardinal)

Cardinal) first try'd his Talent on a Comedy; and was follow'd by *Ariosto*, *Piccolomini*, *Machiavel*, and many others, who took *Plautus* and *Terence* for their Patterns.

Trissino, *Ruscalli*, *Cinthio*, *Tasso*, with many more, wrote *Tragedies* in Blank Verse, with the *Chorus*; and every thing to the best of their power, after the *Athenian Models*.

But *Italy*, says *Rimer*, had no *Fund* for the vast Charge of *Dramatick Representations*; they had no standing Revenue for the *Theatre*; and however Magnificent some Prince might be on an extraordinary Wedding, or great Occasion; there was nothing constant, nor could it, in such Circumstances, be expected, that the *Drama* there should turn to account, or rise to any tolerable Reputation. Therefore the ordinary Business of the Stage was left amongst a Company of *Strolers*, who wandred up and down, acting *Farce*, or turning into *Farce*, whatever they acted. *Castelvetro* tells us, That even at *Rome*, in his time, *Christ's Passion* was so acted by them, as to set all the Audience a laughing. *Rimer's Short view of Tragedy*, Chap. v.

From *Spain* little observable can be expected in relation to *Dramatick Poetry*; since *Campanella* had assur'd them, That it is *The Nurse of Heresie*.

So Father *Guzman* informs us, That his *Catholick Majesty*, *Philip II.* towards the end of his Life, (when his Wisdom was *en su punto*, on the point of Perfection) did quite banish it the Country.

We are also told by another *Jesuite*, how Religiously the truly *Catholick*, *Phil. IV.* in the Year 1646. packt it away, as the Common Plague, from out the Kingdoms of *Spain*, by his Royal Edict.

So we see this *Nurse of Heresie*, this *Head of the Pangæ Hydra*, is like to have no footing within the Catholick Majesties Dominions. The *Inquisition* and the *Myses* must not set their Horses together. *Rimer*, *Ibidem*.

Rapin informs us, That the *Italian* and *Spanish Poets*, have scarce ever yet subjected their *Wit* to *Rules of Art*. Into what *Enormities* hath *Petrarch* run in his *Africa*; *Ariosto* in his *Orlando Furioso*; *Cavalier Marino* in his *Adonis*, and all the other *Italians*, who were ignorant of *Aristotle's Rules*; and followed no other *Guides* but their own *Genius*, and *Capricious Fancy*: Truth is, says *Rapin*, the *Wits of Italy* were so possess'd in favour of the *Romantick Poetry* of *Pulci*, *Boyardo*, and *Ariosto*, that they regarded no other *Rules*, than what the heat of their *Genius* inspir'd. *Rap.* *Reflex. on Aristot. of Poesie*, Part 2. Sect. 17. and 11.

Rapin in another place, speaking of the *Italian* and *Spanish Poets*, says, 'Tis too great Honour to call them *Poets*, they being for the most part but *Rimesters*. *Rap.* *Ibid. Sect. 23.*

Rimer says, That the *Italian Language* is fittest for *Burlesque*, and better becomes the Mouth of *Petrolin* and *Arloquin* in their *Farces*, than any *Heroick Character*. The perpetual *Termination in Vowels* is *Childish*, and themselves confess, rather sweet than grave.

The *Diffyllable Rhimes*, says *Rimer*, force the *Italians* and *Spaniards* on the *Stanza* in *Heroicks*; which besides many other disadvantages, renders the *Language* unfit for *Tragedy*. *Rimer's Pref. before his Translat. of Rapin.*

Dryden tells us, That 'tis almost needless to speak any thing of that *Noble Language*, the *Italian*: All, says he, who are conversant in the *Italian*, cannot but observe

observe, That it is the softest, the sweetest, the most harmonious, not only of any Modern Tongue, but even beyond any of the Learned. It seems indeed to have been invented for the sake of *Poetry* and *Musick*; the *Vowels* are so abounding in all Words, especially in the Terminations of them, that excepting some few *Monosyllables*, the whole *Language* ends in them. Then the Pronunciation is so Manly, and so sonorous, that their very speaking has more of *Musick* in it, than *Dutch Poetry*, and *Song*. It has withal deriv'd so much Copiousness and Eloquence from the *Greek* and *Latin*, in the Composition of Words, and the Formation of them, that (if after all we must call it *Barbarous*) 'tis the most Beautiful and most Learned of any *Barbarism* in Modern Tongues. And we may, at least, as justly praise it, as *Pyrrhus* did the *Roman Discipline* and *Martial Order*, That it was of *Barbarians*, (for so the *Greeks* call'd all other Nations,) but had nothing in it of *Barbarity*. This *Language* has in a manner been refin'd and purify'd from the *Gothick*, ever since the time of *Dante*; which is above four Hundred years ago; and the *French*, who now cast a longing Eye to their Country, are not less ambitious to possess their Elegance in *Poetry* and *Musick*; in both which they labour at Impossibilities. *Dryd*, Pref. to *Albion and Albianus*.

Con-

Concerning the French Poetry; and
their Language in relation to Poe-
try.

*F*rancis the First, by whose encouragement Letters had begun to flourish in France, and Poetry more particularly by the means of *Clement Marot*, (who then translated the *Psalms*, and sent abroad his *Balades*, which *Campanella* reckons to have usher'd in the *Heresie*.) this King *Francis*, says *Rimer*, was much delighted, for want of better, with a Company of *Strolers*, who wandred up and down, acting *Farce*, or turning into *Farce*, whatever they Acted. At the latter end of his Reign we find a *Cause* of the *Strolers* notably pleaded and debated amongst their Lawyers and the King's Counsel—King *Francis* liv'd about five or six Years after. And then were the *Comedians* both *French* and *Italians*, all pack'd off, and banished the Kingdom.

In 1597. *Peter l'Ariveu* published *Comedies* written, as he tells us, in imitation of the Ancient *Greeks*, *Latins*, and Modern *Italians*.

And the End he propos'd was according to *Horace*,

Quelque profit, & Contentement ensemble.

After him *Alexander Hardy* attempted *Tragedy*, whose Works were publish'd Ann. 1625. Not long after succeeded the famous *Corneille*, who began to write for the Stage, after *Hardy's* Model.

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And

And now, says *Rimer*, if the French Theatre did not rise to equal the Glory of the Romans, and Ancient Greeks, it was not for want of Encouragement from the Government. Cardinal Richelieu, who had the power in his hand, did heartily and generously perform his part. He founded the *Academy Royal*, and more especially provided for the Theatre. Yet with this Caution, never to represent *Aucunes Actions Malhonestes, ny d'user d'aucunes paroles lascives, ny à double entente, qui puissent blesser l'honnêteté publique*. And we find the Poets stand corrected, and do penance, if they chance to offend against this Declaration.

Rimer says, That in points of Decency the French are certainly very delicate, and commendable. The noble Encouragement they met withal, and their singular application have carried them very far in the improvement of the *Drama*. Nor were the Audience to be taxed for the hasty applause, they have often given to *Plays* of no great Merit. It has been so in all Nations, says *Rimer*. As, in *Pictures*, A Man who had never seen such a thing before, wou'd find his amusement, and be in admiration at every *Sign-post*, or *Saracen's Head* that he travels by. The first Plays of *Corneille* were better, that is, more regular, than any before him ; the Audience had never seen the like. They now see the difference betwixt his first Essays, and the Plays composed in his riper Years.

After all, says *Rimer*, it is observ'd, how much that wild-goose-chase of *Romance* runs still in their head ; some Scenes of *Love* must every where be shuffled in, tho' never so unseasonable. The *Grecians* were for *Love* and *Musick* as mad as any *Monsieur* of 'em all ; yet their *Musick* kept within Bounds ; attempted no Metamorphosis to turn the *Drama* to an *Opera*. Nor did their

Love

Love come whining on the Stage, to Effeminate the Majesty of their Tragedy. It was not any love for *Briseis* that made *Achilles* so wroth; it was the affront, in taking his booty from him, in the face of the Confederate Army. This, his Stomach cou'd not digest.

— — — *nec gravem*
Peleidæ Stomachum cedere nescii. Horat.

One, with the Genius of *Miguel Cervante*, might, doubtless, find matter for as good a Satyr, from the French Gallantry, says *Rimer*, as *He* had done from the Spanish Chivalry. *Rimer's* short view of Tragedy, chapt. v.

Dryden observes to us, That the Excellency of French Poetry does consist in the nicety of Manners: Their Heroes are the most civil People breathing; but their good Breeding seldom extends to a word of Sense: All their Wit is in their Ceremony: They want the Genius which animates our Stage; and therefore 'tis but necessary when they cannot please, that they should take care not to offend. But, as the Civilest Man in the Company is commonly the dullest, so these Authors, while they are afraid to make you laugh or cry, out of pure good manners, make you sleep. They are so careful not to exasperate a Critique, that they never leave him any Work; so busie with the Broom, and make so clean a riddance, that there is little left either for Censure or for Praise: For no part of a Poem is worth our discommending, where the whole is insipid; as when we have once tasted of pall'd Wine, we stay not to examine it Glass by Glass. But while they affect to shine in trifles, they are often careless in

Essentials. Dryd. Pref. to *All for Love*; or, *The World well lost*.

The present French Poets are generally accus'd, That wherefoever they lay the Scene, or in whatsoever Age, the manners of their Heroes are wholly French: Racin's *Bajazet*, is bred at Constantinople; but his Civilities are convey'd to him by some secret passage, from *Versailles* into the *Seraglio*. Dryd. Pref. to *Troilus and Cressida*.

Rapin tells us, That Judgement is not the Ordinary Talent of the French; 'tis generally in the Contrivance of their Design, that their Poets are defective; and nothing is more rare among them, than a Design that is great, just, and well conceiv'd. They pretend to be more happy in the Talents of Wit and Fancy. Rap. part 1. sect. 19. on Arist. Treat. of Poesie.

We may (says Rapin) flatter our selves with our Wit, and the Genius of our Nation; but our Soul is not enough exalted to frame great Idea's; we are busied with petty Subjects, and by that means it is, that we prove so cold in the great; and that in our Works scarce appears any Shadow of that Sublime Poesie, of which the Ancient Poets have left such excellent Models, and above all Homer and Virgil; for great Poetry must be animated and sustain'd by great Thoughts, and great Sentiments; but these we ordinarily want, says Rapin; either because our Wit is too much limited, or because we take not care to exercise it on important Matters. Rap. Ibid. sect. 26.

The Genius of our Nation, says Rapin, is not strong enough, to sustain an Action on the Theatre by moving only Terror and Pity. These are *Machins* that will not play as they ought, but by great Thoughts; and noble Expressions, of which we are not indeed altogether so capable,

capable, as the *Greeks*. Perhaps, says *Rapin*, our Nation, which is naturally Gallant, has been oblig'd, by the necessity of our Character, to frame for our selves a new System of *Tragedy*, to suit with our Humour.

Rap. on Arist. Treatise of Poesie, part 2. sect. xx.

Sir William Temple takes notice, That to supply the Defects of the *Modern Poetry*, much Application has been made to the smoothness of *Language* or *Stile*; which has at the best, but the Beauty of Colouring in a Picture, and can never make a good one, without Spirit and Strength. The *Academy* set up by Cardinal Richelieu, to amuse the Wits of that Age and Country, and divert them from raking into his Politicks and Ministry, brought *this* in *Vogue*; and the *French Wits* have for this last Age, been in a manner wholly turn'd to the Refinement of their *Language*, and indeed with such success, that it can hardly be excell'd, and runs equally through their *Verse* and their *Prose*. Sir Will. Temple's *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 52, 53.

Dryden says, 'tis true indeed, the *French* have reform'd their Tongue, and brought both their *Prose* and *Poetry* to a Standard; the Sweetness, as well as the Purity is much improv'd, by throwing off the unnecessary *Consonants*, which made their Spelling tedious, and their Pronunciation harsh: But after all, as nothing can be improv'd beyond its own *Species*, or farther than its Original Nature will allow; as an ill Voice, tho' never so thoroughly instructed in the Rules of Musick, can never be brought to Sing Harmoniously, nor many an Honest *Critick* ever arrive to be a good *Poet*; so neither can the natural Harshness of the *French*, or their perpetual ill Accent, be ever refin'd into perfect Harmony like the *Italian*. Dryd. Pref. to Albion and Albianus.

The French Language, says Rimer, wants strength and Sinews, is too feeble for the Weight and Majesty of Tragedy. We see their Consonants spread on Paper, but they stick in the Hedge; they pass not their teeth in their Pronunciation.

The French, says Rimer, are not only fetter'd with Ryme, but their Verse is the long Alexandrine, of Twelve Syllables; with a stop, or pause always in the middle: Their own best Authors are sensible of this halt in their Verse, and complain of that Cesure and perpetual Monotony as they call it. Rimer's short view of Tragedy, chapt. v.

Concerning Rhyme, and Blank Verse.

Dryden tells us, The advantages which Rhyme has over Blank Verse, are so many, that it were lost time to name them: Sir Philip Sidney, in his Defence of Poesie, gives us one, which, in my opinion, says Dryden, is not the least considerable; I mean, the help it brings to Memory; which Rhyme so knits up by the affinity of Sounds; that by rememb'reng the last Words in one Line, we often call to mind both the Verses. Then in the quickness of Reparties (which in Discursive Scenes fall very often) it has so particular a Grace, and is so aptly suited to them, that the sudden smartness of the Answer, and the sweetness of the Rhyme, set off the Beauty of each other. But that benefit which

which I consider most in it, says *Dryden*, because I have not seldom found it, is, that it bounds and circumscribes the *Fancy*. For imagination in a *Poet* is a Faculty so wild and lawless, that, like an high-ranging *Spaniel*, it must have *Clogs* tied to it, lest it out-run the *Judgment*. The great easiness of *Blank Verse*, renders the *Poet* too luxuriant; he is tempted to say many things which might better be omitted, or at least shut up in fewer Words: But when the difficulty of Artful *Rhyming* is interpos'd, where the *Poet* commonly confines his Sense to his Couplet, and must contrive that Sense into such Words, that the *Rhyme* shall naturally follow them, not they the *Rhyme*; the *Fancy* then gives leisure to the *Judgment* to come in; which seeing so heavy a Tax impos'd, is ready to cut off all unnecessary Expences. This last Consideration has already answer'd an Objection which some have made; that *Rhyme* is only an Embroidery of Sense, to make that which is ordinary in it self, pass for Excellent, with less Examination. But certainly, that which most regulates the *Fancy*, and gives the *Judgment* its busiest Employment, is like to bring forth the richest and clearest Thoughts. The *Poet* examines that most which he produceth with the greatest leisure, and which he knows must pass the severest Test of the Audience, because they are aptest to have it ever in their Memory: As the Stomach makes the best Concoction, when it strictly embraces the Nourishment, and takes account of every little particle as it passes through. *Dryd.* Dedic. to the Earl of Orrery, before the Rival-Ladies.

Shakespear (who with some Errors not to be avoided in that Age, had, undoubtedly, a larger Soul of *Poesie* than ever any of our Nation) was the first, who, to shun the pains of continual *Rhyming*, invented that kind of

of Writing, which we call *Blank Verse*, but the French more properly, *Prose Mesurée*; into which the English Tongue so naturally slides, that in Writing *Prose* 'tis hardly to be avoided. And therefore, I admire, says Dryden, that some Men should perpetually stumble in a way so easie. *Dryd. Ibid.*

Whether *Heroick Verse* ought to be admitted into serious Plays, is not now to be disputed: 'Tis already in possession of the Stage: And I dare confidently affirm, says Dryden, that very few *Tragedies*, in this Age, shall be receiv'd without it. All the Arguments which are form'd against it, can amount to no more than this, that it is not so near Conversation as *Prose*; and therefore not so natural. But it is very clear (says Dryden) to all who understand *Poetry*, that serious Plays ought not to imitate Conversation too nearly. If nothing were to be rais'd above that level, the foundation of *Poetry* would be destroy'd. And, if you once admit of a Latitude, that Thoughts may be exalted, and that Images and Actions may be rais'd above the Life, and describ'd in *Measure* without *Rhyme*, that leads you (says Dryden) insensibly from your own Principles to mine: You are already so far onward of your way, that you have forsaken the Imitation of ordinary Converse. You are gone beyond it; and, to continue where you are, is to lodge in the open field, betwixt two Inns. You have lost that which you call Natural, and have not acquir'd the last perfection of Art. But it was only *Custome* which cozen'd us so long: We thought, because *Shakespear* and *Fletcher* went no farther, that there the Pillars of *Poetry* were to be erected. That, because they excellently describ'd Passion without *Rhyme*, therefore *Rhyme* was not capable of describing it. But time has now convinc'd most Men of that Error. 'Tis indeed so

so difficult to write *Verse*, that the Adversaries of it have a good Plea against many who undertake that Task, without being form'd by Art or Nature for it. Yet, even they (says Dryden) who have written worst in it, would have written worse without it. They have couzen'd many with their Sound, who never took the pains to examine their Sense. In fine, they have succeeded: Though 'tis true, they have more dishonour'd Rhyme by their good success, than they could have done by their ill. But I am willing, says Dryden, to let fall this Argument: 'Tis free for every Man to write, or not to write, in *Verse*, as he judges it to be, or not to be his Talent; or as he imagines the Audience will receive it. *Dryd. Essay of Heroick Plays; before Almanzor and Almahide.*

Mr. Milton labour'd all he could, to free us from the troublesome Bondage of Rhyming, as he calls it; and by his Incomparable Poems of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regain'd*, has given us a most perfect Example of Blank-*Verse*.

How the Noble, and Ingenious Lord Roscommon, stood affected to Rhyme, appears by these following Lines:

Of many faults Rhyme is (perhaps) the Cause,
Too strict to Rhyme we slight more useful Laws.
For That, in Greece or Rome, was never known,
Till by Barbarian Deluges o'reflow'n,
Subdu'd, undone, They did at last Obey,
And change their own for their Invaders way.
I grant that from some Mossie, Idol Oak
In Double Rhymes our Thor and Woden spoke;

*And by Succession of unlearned Times,
As Bards began, so Monks rung on the Chimes.
But now that Phœbus and the Sacred Nine,
With all their Beams on our blest Islands shine,
Why should not We their Ancient Rites restore,
And be, what Rome or Athens were before?*

Roscom. *Essay on Translated Verse.*

Concerning Translations.

M R. James Howel remarks, That every Mans Genius is not cut out for a *Translator*, there being a kind of servility therein; For (says he) it must needs be somewhat tedious to one that hath any Free-born Thoughts within him, and genuine Conceptions of his own, to enchain himself to a *Verbal Servitude*, and the sense of another. Moreover, *Translations* are but as turn-coated Things at best; says Howel, especially among *Languages* that have advantages one of another, as the *Italian* hath of the *English*, which may be said to differ one from the other as *Silk* does from *Cloth*, the common wear of both Countries where they are spoken: And as *Cloth* is the more substantial, so the *English Tongue* by reason 'tis so knotted with *Consonants*, is the stronger, and the more sinewy of the two; But *Silk* is more smooth and sliker, and so is the *Italian Tongue* compar'd to the *English*. Or else, says Howel, *Translations* are like the wrong side of a *Turky Carpet*, which uses to be full of Thrums and Knots, and nothing

thing so even as the right side. Or, to conclude, *Translations* are like *Wines* taken off the *Lees*, and pour'd into other *Vessels*, that must needs lose somewhat of their first strength and briskness, which in the pouring, or passage rather evaporates into air.

Moreover touching *Translations*, says *Howel*, it is to be observ'd, That every *Language* hath certain *Idiomes*, Proverbs and peculiar Expressions of its own; which are not rendible in any other but *Paraphrastically*; therefore he overacts the Office of an *Interpreter*, who doth enslave himself too strictly to Words or Phrases; I have heard (says *Howel*) of an *Excess* among *Limners*, call'd *too much to the Life*, which happens when one aims at likeness more than skill; So in Version of *Languages* one may be so over punctual in Words, that he may mar the matter; The greatest fidelity that can be expected in a *Translator*, is to keep still a foot, and entire, the true genuine Sense of the *Author*, with the main Design he drives at. *Howel's Famili. Lett. Vol. 3.*
Lett. 21.

Dr. *Burnet*, the present Bishop of *Salisbury*, observes, That there is no way of Writing so proper, for the refining and polishing a *Language*, as the *Translating* of Books into it, if he that undertakes it, has a competent skill of the one Tongue, and is a Master of the other. When a Man writes his own Thoughts, the heat of his Fancy, and the quickness of his Mind, carry him so much after the Notions themselves, that for the most part he is too warm to judge of the aptness of Words, and the justness of Figures; so that he either neglects these too much, or over-does them: But when a Man *Translates*, he has none of these Heats about him: And therefore the *French* took no ill Method, when they intended to reform and beautifie their *Language*,

guage, in setting their best Writers on Work to Translate the Greek and Latin Authors into it. There is so little praise got by Translations, that a Man cannot be engaged to it out of Vanity, for it has past for a sign of a slow Mind, that can amuse it self with so mean an Entertainment. But we begin to grow wiser, says Burnet, and tho' ordinary Translators must succeed ill in the esteem of the World, yet some have appear'd of late that will, I hope, bring that way of Writing in Credit. *Burnet's Pref. to his Translat. of Sir Tho. More's Utopia.*

*'Tis true, Composing is the Nobler Part,
But good Translation is no easie Art :
For tho' Materials have long since been found,
Yet both your fancy, and your Hands are bound ;
And by Improving what was writ Before ;
Invention labours less, but Judgment, more.*

Roscom's Essay on Translated Verse.

Dryden tells us, That a Translator is to make his Author appear as charming as possibly he can, provided he maintains his Character, and makes him not unlike himself. Translation, says Dryden, is a kind of Drawing after the Life; where every one will acknowledge there is a double sort of Likeness, a good one and a bad. 'Tis one thing to draw the Out-lines true, the Features like, the Proportions exact, the Colouring it self perhaps tolerable; and another thing to make all these graceful, by the posture, the shadowings, and chiefly by the Spirit which animates the whole. I cannot, says Dryden, without some indignation, look on an ill Copy of an Excellent Original. Much less can I behold

behold with patience *Virgil*, *Homer*, and some others, whose Beauties (says *Dryden*) I have been endeavouring all my Life to imitate, so abus'd, as I may say to their faces by a botching Interpreter. What *English* Readers unacquainted with *Greek* or *Latin* will believe Me or any other Man, when we commend those Authors, and confess we derive all that is pardonable in us from their Fountains, if they take those to be the same Poets, whom our *Ogleby's* have *Translated*? But I dare assure them, says *Dryden*, that a good Poet is no more like himself, in a dull *Translation*, than his Carcass would be to his living Body. There are many who understand *Greek* and *Latin*, and yet are ignorant of their Mother Tongue. The proprieties and delicacies of the *English* are known to few; 'tis impossible even for a good Wit, to understand and practice them without the help of a liberal Education, long Reading, and digesting of those few good Authors we have amongst us, the Knowledge of Men and Manners, the freedom of Habitudes, and Conversation with the best Company of both Sexes; and in short, without wearing off the rust which he contracted, while he was laying in a Stock of Learning. Thus difficult it is to understand the purity of *English*, and critically to discern not only good Writers from bad, and a proper stile from a Corrupt, but also to distinguish that which is pure in a good Author, from that which is Vicious and Corrupt in him. And for want of all these Requisites, or the greatest part of them, most of our Ingenious young Men, says *Dryden*, take some cry'd up *English* Poet for their Model, adore him, and imitate him as they think, without knowing wherein he is defective, where he is Boyish and trifling, wherein either his Thoughts

are

are improper to his Subject, or his Expressions unworthy of his Thoughts, or the Turn of both is unharmonious. Thus it appears necessary, that a Man shou'd be a nice Critick in his Mother Tongue, before he attempts to *Translate* a foreign Language. Neither is it sufficient that he be able to judge of Words and Stile; but he must be a Master of them too: He must perfectly understand his Authors Tongue, and absolutely command his own: So that to be a thorow *Translator*, he must be a thorow *Poet*. Neither is it enough to give his Authors Sense, in good *English*, in Poetical Expressions, and in Musical Numbers: For, tho' all these are exceeding difficult to perform, there yet remains an harder Task; and 'tis a secret of which few *Translators* have sufficiently thought. I have already hinted a Word or two concerning it; that is, the maintaining the *Character* of an Author, which distinguishes him from all others, and makes him appear that Individual Poet whom you woud Interpret. For example, not only the Thoughts, but the Style and Versification of *Virgil* and *Ovid*, are very different: Yet I see, says *Dryden*, even in our best *Poets*, who have *Translated* some parts of them, that they have confounded their several Talents; and by endeavouring only at the sweetness and harmony of *Numbers*, have made them both so much alike, that if I did not know the *Originals*, I shou'd never be able to judge by the *Copies*, which was *Virgil*, and which was *Ovid*. It was objected against a late noble Painter, that he drew many Graceful Pictures, but few of them were like. And this happen'd to him, because he always studied himself more than those who sat to him. In such *Translators*, says *Dryden*, I can easily distinguish the hand
which

which perform'd the Work, but I cannot distinguish their Poet from another. Suppose two Authors are equally sweet, yet there is a great distinction to be made in *Sweetness*, as in that of *Sugar*, and that of *Honey*.

Dryd. Pref. to the 2d. Part of Poetic. Miscell.

A *Translator* should not go so close, as to tread on the heels of his *Author*, and so hurt him by his too near approach. A noble *Author* wou'd not be persu'd too close by a *Translator*. We lose his *Spirit*, when we think to take his *Body*. The grosser Part remains with us, but the *Soul* is flown away, in some Noble Expression or some delicate turn of Words, or Thought.

Dryd. Dedic. before the Translat. of Juvenal, pag. 52.

Sir John Denham says, There are so few *Translations* which deserve *praise*, that he scarce ever saw any which deserv'd *pardon*; those who travel in that kind, being for the most part so unhappy, as to rob others, without enriching themselves, pulling down the fame of good Authors, without raising their own: Neither hath any Author been more hardly dealt withal, than *Virgil*; and the reason is Evident; for, what is more excellent, is most imitable, and if even the *Worst Authors* are yet made worse by their *Translators*, how impossible is it, not to do great injury to the *Best*?

I conceive it, says Denham, a vulgar Error in *Translating Poets*, to affect being *Fidus Interpres*; let that care be with them who deal in Matters of *Fact*, or Matters of *Faith*: But whosoever aims at it in *Poetry*, as he attempts what is not requir'd, so he shall never perform what he attempts; for it is not his business alone to *Translate Language* into *Language*, but *Poësie* into *Poësie*; and *Poësie* is of so subtile a *Spirit*, that

that in pouring out of one *Language* into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new Spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *Caput Mortuum*, there being certain Graces and Happinesses peculiar to every *Language*, which gives Life and Energy to the Words; And whosoever offers at *Verbal Translations*, shall have the Misfortune of that young *Traveller*, who lost his own *Language* abroad, and brought home no other instead of it: For the Grace of the *Latin* will be lost by being turned into *English* Words; and the Grace of the *English*, by being turn'd into the *Latin* Phrase. And as *Speech* is the Apparel of our Thoughts, so are there certain Garbes and Modes of Speaking, which vary with the Times; the fashion of our *Cloaths* being not more subject to alteration, than that of our *Speech*; And this I think *Tacitus* means, by that which he calls, *Sermonem temporis istius auribus accommodatum*; the delight of Change being as due to the curiosity of the Ear, as of the Eye. *Denham's Pref. to The Destruction of Troy.*

Dr. *Sprat* the present Bishop of Rochester, tells us, That this way of leaving *Verbal Translations*, and chiefly regarding the *Sense* and *Genius* of the *Author*, was scarce heard of in *England* before this present Age. He says, that if Mr. *Cowley* was not the absolute Inventor of it; yet he is sure, he did conceive it, and discourse of it, and practice it as soon as any Man. *Sprat's Account of the Life of Mr. Abraham Cowley.*

Concerning

Concerning Criticks and Criticisms.

Rimer tells us, That as the *Artist* would not take pains to polish a *Diamond*, if none besides himself were quick-sighted enough to discern the flaw; so Poets would grow negligent, if the *Criticks* had not a strict eye over their *Miscarriages*. Yet (says Rimer) it often happens, that this eye is so distorted by envy or ill nature, that it sees nothing aright. Some *Criticks* are like *Wasps*, that rather annoy the *Bees*, than terrifie the *Drones*.

For this sort of Learning, our Neighbour Nations have got far the start of us; in the last *Century*, *Italy* swarm'd with *Criticks*, where, amongst many of less note, *Castelvetro* opposed all Comers; and the famous Academy *La Crusca* was always impeaching some or other of the best Authors. *Spain*, in those days, bred great Wits, but I think (says Rimer,) was never so crowded, that they needed to fall out, and quarrel amongst themselves. But from *Italy*, *France* took the Cudgels; and tho' some light strokes passed in the days of *Marot*, *Baif*, &c. yet they fell not to it in earnest, nor was any noble Contest amongst them, till the Royal Academy was founded, and Cardinal *Richelieu* encourag'd and rallied all the scatter'd Wits under his Banner. Then *Malherb* reform'd their ancient licentious Poetry; and *Corneille's Cid* rais'd many Factions amongst them. At this time with us many great Wits flourisht, but *Ben Johnson*, I think, says Rimer, had all the Critical Learning to himself; and till of late Years *England* was as free from *Criticks*, as it is now

from *Wolves*, that a harmless well-meaning Book might pass without any danger. But now this privilege, whatever extraordinary Talent it requires, is usurped by the most ignorant: And they who are least acquainted with the Game, are aptest to bark at every thing that comes in their way. *Rimer's Pref. to Rapin's Reflex. on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie.*

The *Anonymous Translator* of St. *Euvremont's mixt Essays*, in his Preface, speaking of Epick Poems, observes, That the *Dutch* and *Germans* (as tho' frozen up) have produced little in this kind; yet (says he) we must confess that *Grotius*, *Heinsius*, *Scaliger*, and *Vossius* were Learned Criticks. Some of the *English* have indeed rais'd their Pens, and soar'd as high as any of the *Italians*, or *French*; yet *Criticism* came but very lately in fashion amongst us; without doubt *Ben. Johnson* had a large stock of *Critical Learning*; *Spencer* had studied *Homer*, and *Virgil*, and *Tasso*, yet he was mis-led, and debauch'd by *Ariosto*, as Mr. *Rimer* judiciously observes; *Davenant* gives some stroaks of great Learning and Judgment, yet he is for unbeatened Tracks, new Ways, and undiscover'd Seas; *Cowley* was a great Master of the *Ancients*, and had the true Genius and Character of a Poet; yet this nicety and boldness of *Criticism* was a stranger all this time to our Climate; Mr. *Rimer*, and Mr. *Dryden* have begun to launch out into it, and indeed they have been very fortunate Adventurers. The Earls of *Roscommon* and *Mulgrave*, and Mr. *Waller* have given some fine touches; Mr. *Dryden's* *Criticks* are generally quaint and solid, his *Prefaces* (says this *Translator*) do as often correct and improve my Judgment, as his *Verses* do charm my Fancy; he is every where Sweet, Elegant, and Sublime; the Poet and Critick were seldom both so Conspicuous and Illustrious

Illustrious in one Man as in him, except *Rapin*. Mr. *Rimer* in his incomparable Preface to *Rapin*, and in his *Reflexions* upon some late *Tragedies*, hath given sufficient Proofs, that he hath studied and understands *Aristotle* and *Horace*, *Homer* and *Virgil*, besides the *Wits* of all Countries and Ages; so that we may justly number him in the first Rank of *Criticks*, as having a most accomplish'd Idea of *Poetry*, and the *Stage*.

Dryden remarks, That we are fallen into an Age of Illiterate, Censorious, and Detracting People, who thus qualified set up for *Criticks*.

In the first place, says *Dryden*, I must take leave to tell them, that they wholly mistake the nature of *Criticism*, who think its business is principally to find fault. *Criticism*, as 'twas first instituted by *Aristotle*, was meant a Standard of judging well. The chiefest part of which, is, to observe those Excellencies, which should delight a *Reasonable Reader*. If the Design, the Conduct, the Thoughts, and the Expressions of a *Poem*, be generally such as proceed from a true *Genius* of *Poetry*; the *Critick* ought to pass his Judgment in favour of the Author. 'Tis malicious and unmanly to snarl at the little lapses of a Pen, from which *Virgil* himself stands not exempted. *Horace* acknowledges that honest *Homer* nods sometimes: He is not equally awake in every Line: But he leaves it also as a standing Measure for our Judgments,

—*Non, ubi plura nitent in Carmine, paucis
Offendi Maculis, quas aut incuria fudit
Aut humana parum cavit Natura.*—

And *Longinus*, who was undoubtedly, after *Aristotle*, the greatest *Critick* among the *Greeks*, in his twenty

seventh Chapter περὶ ὄψης, has (says Dryden) judiciously preferr'd the Sublime Genius that sometimes errs, to the midling or indifferent one which makes few faults, but seldom or never rises to an Excellence. He compares the first to a Man of large Possessions, who has not leisure to consider of every slight Expence, will not debase himself to the management of every Trifle: Particular Sums are not laid out, or spar'd to the greatest advantage in his Oeconomy: But are sometimes suffer'd to run to waste, while he is only careful of the Main. On the other side, he likens the Mediocrity of Wit, to one of a mean fortune, who manages his Store with extreme frugality, or rather parsimony: But who with fear of running into profuseness, never arrives to the Magnificence of Living. This kind of Genius, says Dryden, writes indeed correctly. A wary Man he is in Grammar; very nice as to Solæcism or Barbarism, judges to a hair of little decencies, knows better than any Man, what is not to be written; and never hazards himself so far as to fall: But plods on deliberately; and as a grave Man ought, is sure to put his Staff before him; in short, he sets his heart upon it; and with wonderful care makes his Busines sure: That is, in plain English, neither to be blam'd, nor prais'd. I could, says Longinus, find out some Blemishes in Homer: And am perhaps, as naturally inclin'd to be disgusted at a fault as another Man: But, after all, to speak impartially, his failings are such, as are only Marks of Humane Frailty: They are little Mistakes, or rather Negligencies, which have escap'd his Pen in the fervour of his Writing; the Sublimity of his Spirit carries it with me against his Carelessness: And tho' Apollonius's Argonautes, and Theocritus's Eidyllia, are more free from Errors, there is not any Man of so false a Judgment, who

who would chuse rather to have been *Apollonius* or *Theocritus*, than *Homer*. *Dryd.* *Apology for Heroick Poetry*; before *The State of Innocence*.

Ill Writers, says *Dryden*, are usually the sharpest Censors: For they (as the best Poet, and the best Patron said,) when in the full perfection of decay, turn *Vinegar*, and come again in Play. Thus the Corruption of a Poet, is the Generation of a Critick: I mean, says *Dryden*, of a Critick in the general acceptation of this Age: For formerly they were quite another Species of Men. They were Defenders of Poets, and Commentators on their Works: To Illustrate obscure Beauties; to place some passages in a better Light, to redeem Others from Malicious Interpretations: To help out an Author's Modesty, who is not ostentatious of his Wit; and in short, to shield him from the ill Nature of those Fellows, who were then call'd *Zoili*, and *Momi*, and now take upon themselves the Venerable Name of Censors. But neither *Zoilus*, nor he who endeavour'd to defame *Virgil*, were ever Adopted into the Name of Criticks by the Ancients: What their Reputation was then, We know; and their Successors in this Age deserve no better. Are our Auxiliary Forces, says *Dryden*, turn'd our Enemies? Are they, who, at best, are but Wits of the Second Order, and whose only Credit amongst Readers, is what they obtain'd by being subservient to the Fame of Writers, are these become Rebels of Slaves, and Usurpers of Subjects; Or, to speak in the most Honourable Terms of them, are they (says *Dryden*) from our Seconds, become Principals against us? Does the *Ivy* undermine the *Oak*, which supports its weakness? What labour wo'd it cost them to put in a better Line, than the *Worst* of those, which they expunge in a True Poet? *Petronius*, the greatest Wit perhaps

perhaps of all the *Romans*, yet when his Envy prevail'd upon his Judgment, to fall on *Lucan*, he fell himself in his Attempt: He perform'd worse in his Essay of the *Civil War*, than the Author of the *Pharsalia*: And avoiding his Errors, has made greater of his own. *Julius Scaliger*, wou'd needs turn down *Homer*, and Abdicate him, after the possession of Three Thousand Years; Has he succeeded in his Attempt? He has indeed shown us some of those Imperfections in him, which are incident to Humane Kind: But who had not rather be that *Homer* than this *Scaliger*? You see the same *Hypercritick*, when he endeavours to mend the beginning of *Claudian*, (a faulty Poet, and living in a Barbarous Age;) yet how short he comes of him, and substitutes such Verses of his own, as deserve the *Ferrula*. What a Censure has he made of *Lucan*, that he rather seems to Bark, than Sing? Wou'd any but a Dog, have made so snarling a Comparison? One wou'd have thought, he had Learn'd *Latin*, as late as they tell us he did *Greek*: Yet he came off, with a pace tuâ, by your good leave, *Lucan*; he call'd him not by those outrageous Names, of *Fool*, *Booby*, and *Block-head*: He had somewhat more of good Manners, than his Successors, as he had much more Knowledge. *Dyed*. Dedic. to the Lord Radcliffe, before The Examen Poeticum.

*They who write ill, and they who ne're durst write,
Turn Criticks, out of meer Revenge and Spight :
A Play-House gives 'em Fame ; and up there starts,
From a mean Fifth-rate Wit, a Man of Parts.
Our Author fears those Criticks as his Fate :
And those he fears, by consequence, must Hate.*

For they the Traffick of all Wit, invade ;
As Scriv'ners draw away the Bankers Trade.

Dryd. Prol. to the 2d. Part of the Conquest of
Granada.

Each puny Censor, who his skill to boast,
Is cheaply Witty on the Poet's Cost.
No Criticks Verdict, should, of right, stand good,
They are excepted all as Men of Blood :
And the same Law shall shield them from their Fury,
Which has excluded Butchers from a Jury.
You'd all be Wits —————

But Writing's tedious, and that way may fail ;
The most Compendious Method is to rail.

Dryd. Prol. to Secret Love : Or, The Maiden
Queen.

Half-Wits are Fleas ; so little and so light ;
We scarce cou'd know they live, but that they bite.

Dryd. Prol. to All for Love.

Concerning

Concerning Opera's.

A N *Opera* is a Poetical Tale, or Fiction, represented by *Vocal* and *Instrumental Musick*, adorn'd with *Scenes*, *Machines*, and *Dancing*. The suppos'd Persons of this Musical *Drama*, are generally supernatural, as *Gods*, and *Godesses*, and *Heroes*, which at least are descended from them, and are in due time, to be adopted into their Number. The Subject therefore being extended beyond the Limits of *Humane Nature*, admits of that sort of Marvellous and Surprizing Conduct, which is rejected in other *Plays*. *Humane Impossibilities* are to be receiv'd, as they are in *Faith*; because where *Gods* are introduc'd, a *Supreme Power* is to be understood, and *Second Causes* are out of doors: Yet Propriety is to be observ'd even here. The *Gods* are all to manage their peculiar Provinces; and what was attributed by the *Heathens* to one Power, ought not to be perform'd by any other. *Phœbus* must foretel, *Mercury* must charm with his *Caduceus*, and *Juno* must reconcile the Quarrels of the *Marriage-Bed*. To conclude, They must all act according to their distinct and peculiar Characters. If the Persons represented were to speak upon the Stage, it wou'd follow of necessity, That the Expressions should be *Lofty*, *Figurative*, and *Majestical*: But the Nature of an *Opera* denies the frequent use of those *Poetical Ornaments*: For *Vocal Musick*, tho' it often admits a lostiness of Sound; yet always exacts an harmonious

nious Sweetness : Or, to distinguish yet more justly, The Recitative Part of the *Opera* requires a more Masculine Beauty of Expression and Sound : The *Other*, which (for want of a proper *English* word) I must call *The Songish Part*, must abound in the softness and variety of *Numbers*; its principal Intention, being to please the *Hearing*, rather than to gratifie the Understanding.

It appears indeed preposterous at first Sight, That *Rhime*, on any Consideration, should take place of *Reason*. But, in order to resolve the Probleme, this fundamental Proposition must be settled, That the first Inventors of any Art or Science, provided they have brought it to perfection, are, in reason, to give Laws to it; and according to their Model, all after-Undertakers are to build. Thus in *Epick Poetry*, no Man ought to dispute the Authority of *Homer*, who gave the first Being to that Master-piece of Art, and endued it with that Form of Perfection in all its Parts, that nothing was wanting to its Excellency. *Virgil* therefore, and those very few who have succeeded him, endeavour'd not to introduce or innovate any thing in a Design already perfected, but imitated the *Plan* of the *Inventor*; and are only so far true *Heroick Poets*, as they have built on the Foundations of *Homer*. Thus *Pindar*, the Author of those *Odes*, (which are so admirably restor'd by Mr. *Cowley* in our Language,) ought for ever to be the Standard of them; and we are bound according to the practice of *Horace* and Mr. *Cowley*, to Copy him. Now, to apply this *Axiom* to our present purpose, whosoever undertakes the Writing of an *Opera*, (which is a Modern

Invention, though built; indeed, on the Foundations of *Ethnick Worship*,) is oblig'd to imitate the Design of the *Italians*, who have not only invented, but brought to perfection, this sort of *Dramatick Musical Entertainment*. I have not been able, says *Dryden*, by any search, to get any Light either of the time, when it began, or of the first Author: But I have probable Reasons, which induce me to believe, that some *Italians*, having curiously observ'd the Gallantries of the *Spanish Moors* at their *Zambras*, or Royal Feasts, where *Musick*, *Songs*, and *Dancing* were in perfection; together with their *Machines*, which are usual at their *Sortiias*, or running at the Ring, and other Solemnities, may possibly have refin'd upon those *Moresque Divertisements*, and produc'd this delightful Entertainment, by leaving out the Warlike Part of the *Carousels*, and forming a *Poetical Design* for the use of the *Machines*, the *Songs*, and *Dances*. But however it began, (for this is only Conjectural,) we know, says *Dryden*, that for some Centuries, the Knowledge of *Musick* has flourish'd principally in *Italy*, the Mother of Learning and of Arts; that *Poetry* and *Painting* have been there restor'd, and so cultivated by *Italian Masters*, that all *Europe* has been enrich'd out of their Treasury; and the other Parts of it, in relation to those delightful Arts, are still as much Provincial to *Italy*, as they were in the time of the *Roman Empire*. Their first *Opera's* seem to have been intended for the Celebration of the *Marriages* of their *Princes*, or for the Magnificence of some general time of Joy. Accordingly the Expences of them were from the Purse of the *Sovereign*, or of the

the Republick, as they are still practis'd at *Venice*, *Rome*, and other Places at their Carnivals. *Savoy* and *Florence* have often us'd them in their Courts, at the *Weddings* of their *Dukes*: And at *Turin* particularly, was perform'd the *Pastor Fido*, written by the famous *Guarini*, which is a *Pastoral Opera* made to Solemnize the *Marriage* of a *Duke* of *Savoy*. The Prologue of it has given the Design to all the *French*; which is a *Complement* to the *Sovereign Power* by some *God* or *Goddeses*; so that it looks no less, than a kind of *Embassie* from *Heaven* to *Earth*. I said in the Beginning of this Discourse, says *Dryden*, that the Persons represented in *Opera's*, are generally *Gods*, *Goddeses*, and *Heroes* descended from them, who are suppos'd to be their peculiar Care; which hinders not, but that meaner Persons may sometimes gracefully be introduc'd, especially if they have relation to those first Times, which *Poets* call the *Golden Age*: Wherein by reason of their *Innocence*, those happy *Mortals* were suppos'd to have had a more familiar Intercourse with *Superiour Beings*; and therefore *Shepherds* might reasonably be admitted, as of all *Callings*, the most innocent, the most happy, and who, by reason of the spare Time they had, in their almost idle Employment, had most leisure to make *Verses*, and to be in *Love*; without somewhat of which *Passion*, no *Opera* can possibly subsist.—

Thought and *Elevation* of *Fancy*, says *Dryden*, are not of the nature of this sort of *Writing*: The necessity of double Rhimes, and ordering of the Words and Numbers for the sweetnes of the Voice, are the main Hinges on which an *Opera* must move. *Dryd.* Pref. to Albion and Albanus.

Dryden, in the Post-script to the aforesaid Preface, says, That possibly the Italians went not so far as Spain, for the Invention of their Opera's. They might have it in their own Country; and that by gathering up the Shipwrecks of the Athenian and Roman Theaters; which we know were adorn'd with Scenes, Musick, Dances, and Machines, especially the Grecian.

The Author of The Gentleman's Journal informs us, That other Nations bestow the Name of Opera only on such Plays whereof every Word is Sung. But experience (says he) has taught us, That our English Genius will not relish that perpetual Singing. He tells us, he dares not accuse the Language for being over-charg'd with Consonants, which may take off the beauties of the Recitative Part, though in several other Countries he has seen their Opera's still crowded every time, tho' long, and almost all Recitative. It is true, that their Trio's, Chorus's, lively Songs and Recits with Accompaniments of Instruments, Symphonies, Machines, and Excellent Dances make the rest be born with, and the one sets off the other: But our English Gentlemen, when their Ear is satisfy'd, are desirous to have their Mind pleas'd, and Musick and Dancing industriously intermix'd with Comedy or Tragedy: I have often observ'd, says this Author, That the Audience is no less attentive to some extraordinary Scenes of Passion or Mirth, than to what they call Beaux Endroits, or the most ravishing part of the Musical Performance: But had those Scenes, tho' never so well wrought up, been Sung, they would have lost most of their Beauty. All this

this however doth not lessen the power of *Musick*, for its Charms command our Attention, when us'd in their place, and the admirable *Consorts* we have in *Charles-Street* and *York-Buildings*, are an undeniable proof of it. But this (says our *Author*) shows that what is unnatural, as are Plays altogether *Sung*, will soon make one uneasie, which *Comedy* or *Tragedy* can never do, unless they be bad. These *Opera's* or *Plays* in *Musick* have been us'd for above a *Century* amongst the *Italians*; most Cities in *Italy* have their *Opera's*, as also *Sicily* and *Savoy*. But *Venice* is the place where they are Triumphant. They have there most *Carnivals*, Nine or Ten *Opera's* on seven several Stages, and each house striving to out-do the rest, the *Musick* and *Voices* are always extraordinary. 'Tis almost incredible (says our *Author*) how one single Town can furnish them with Spectators: Yet all these Preparations are only for the *Carnaival*, and last but two Months, and some of the *Women* that Sing have four hundred *Pistols* paid them for that time; they never want Excellent *Trebles*, for many are made *Eunuchs* for that purpose, though it is very ridiculous to see those Effeminate Fellows with their *Mossy Chins*, play a *Hero's* or a *Lover's* part, which they mar by their cold liveless way of Acting. They have little or no *Machines* there; their *Decorations* and *Cloaths* are but mean, and their *Stages* but ill Illuminated, but their *Musick* makes amends for the Rest: Yet tho' Strangers cannot but admire it, they find, as Mr. *Dryden* ingeniously observes upon another Subject, That it is not pleasant to be tickled too long, and wish for the Conclusion usually before the *Opera*

Opera be half done. *Gentleman's Journal*, Janu-
ary, 169½.

Horace was very angry with those empty Shows
and Vanity, which the Gentlemen of his time ran like
mad after.

— *Insanos Oculos, & gaudia Vana.*

But, says Rimer, what would he have said to the French Opera of late so much in Vogue? There it is for you to bewitch your Eyes, and to charm your Ears. There is a Cup of Enchantment, there is Musick and Machine; Circe and Calipso in Conspiracy against Nature and good Sense. 'Tis a Debauch the most insinuating, and the most pernicious; none would think an Opera and Civil Reason, should be the growth of one and the same Climate. But (says Rimer) shall we wonder at any thing for a Sacrifice to the Grand Monarch? such Worship, such Idol. All Flattery to him is insipid, unless it be prodigious: Nothing Reasonable, or within Compass, can come near the Matter. All must be monstrous, enormous, and outragious to Nature, to be like him, or give any Echo on his Appetite. Were Rabelais alive again, he would look on his Garagantua, as but a Pygmy.

The Heroes Race excels the Poet's Thought.

The Academy Royal, says Rimer, may pack up their Modes and Methods, & pensées ingenieuses; the Racines and the Corneilles must all now dance to the Tune

Tune of *Baptista*. Here is the *Opera*; here is *Machine* and *Baptista*, farewell *Apollo* and the *Muses*.

Away with your *Opera* from the Theatre, says *Rimmer*; better had they become the *Heathen Temples*, or the *Corybantian Priests*, and (*Semiviros Gallos*) the old *Capons of Gaul*, than a People that pretend from *Charlemayn*, or descend from the undoubted Loyns of *Germain* and *Norman Conquerors*. *Rimmer's Short View of Tragedy*, chap. I. pag. 9, 10.

Concerning Farce.

ALL other Species of *Dramatique Poetry*, have their due Respect amongst us; but I know not, says *Tate*, by what fate *Farce* is lookt upon to be so mean and inconsiderable. If it were to be judg'd by the Difficulty of the Work, we should soon change our Notion. I know it is generally suppos'd an easie Task, but it is such an Easiness as is well describ'd by *Horace*,

— — — *Ut sibi Quibus*
Speret Idem, sudet multum, frustraque labore;
Ausus Idem — — —

Or, as the Words are render'd with advantage by his Incomparable *Translator*, the *Earl of Roscommon*,

That

*That ev'ry One will think to write the same,
And not without much Pains be undeceiv'd.*

The Reason (says Tate) I presume to be this, (and I am certain the Undertaker will find it true) that *Tragedy, Comedy, and Pastoral* it self, subsist upon *Nature*: So that whosoever has a *Genius to Copy Her*, is assur'd of Success, and all the World affords him Subject: Whereas the Business of *Farce* is to exceed *Nature* and *Probability*. But then there are so few Improbabilities that will appear Pleasant, and so much nicety requir'd in the management, that the Performance will be found extreamly difficult. *Nathaniel Tate's Pref. to A Duke and No Duke.*

That I admire not any *Comedy* equally with *Tragedy*, says Dryden, is, perhaps, from the sullenness of my humour; but that I detest those *Farces*, which are now the most frequent Entertainments of the Stage, I am sure I have Reason on my side. *Comedy* consists, though of low Persons, yet of Natural Actions, and Characters, I mean such Humours, Adventures, and Designs, as are to be found and met with in the World. *Farce*, on the other side, consists of forc'd Humours, and unnatural Events: *Comedy* presents us with the Imperfections of Humane Nature: *Farce* entertains us with what is monstrous and Chimerical: The one causes laughter in those who can judge of Men and Manners; by the lively Representation of their folly or corruption; the other produces the same Effect in those who can judge of neither, and that only by its extravagances. The first Works on the Judgment and Fancy;

Fancy ; the latter on the Fancy only : There is more of Satisfaction in the former kind of laughter, and in the latter more of Scorn. But, how it happens, that an impossible Adventure should cause our Mirth, I cannot (says Dryden) so easily imagine. Something there may be in the oddness of it, because on the Stage it is the common Effect of things unexpected to surprize us into a delight : And that is to be ascrib'd to the strange appetite, as I may call it, of the Fancy ; which, like that of a *Longing Woman*, often runs out into the most extravagant desires ; and is better satisfy'd sometimes with Loam, or with the Rinds of Trees, than with the wholsome nourishments of Life. In short, says Dryden, there is the same difference betwixt *Farce* and *Comedy*, as betwixt an *Empirick* and a *true Physician* : Both of them may attain their Ends ; but what the one performs by hazard, the other does by skill. And as the *Artist* is often successless, while the *Mountebank* succeeds ; so *Farces* more commonly take the *People* than *Comedies*. For to write unnatural things, is the most probable way of pleasing them, who understand not *Nature*. And a true Poet often misses of applause, because he cannot debase himself to Write so ill as to please his Audience. *Dryd: Pref. to the Mock-Astrologer.*

The End of the Remarks upon Poetry.

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Characters

CHARACTERS AND CENSURES.

Æschylus.

ÆSCHYLUS an Athenian Tragic Poet, born in the Village of Eleusis; Cotemporary with *Pindar*, in the Sixty Ninth Olympiad, according to the Old Scholiast, but as Mr. Stanly in his most accurate Edition of this Author makes out by diligent Computation, and his Collection out of Mr. Selden's *Marmor Arundeliana*, in the Sixty Third. The Son of Euphorion, and Brother of *Cynegyrus* and *Aminias*, who Signaliz'd themselves in the Battle of *Marathon*, and the Sea-Fight of *Salamis*, in which our Poet also was present. Of Sixty Six Drama's, which he Wrote, (being Victor in 13) and Five Satyrs, we have Extant only Seven Tragedies, his *Prometheus Vinctus*, his *Septem Duces contra Thebas*, *Agamemnon*, *Persæ*, *Eumenides*, *Choephoroi*, *Supplies*. But though he was Victor 13 times, yet it is said, he took it so to heart to be Vanquisht by *Sophocles*, then a Young man, that he left his Country, and betook himself to *Hiero King of Sicily*, where he made his Tragedy *Etna*, so call'd from the City of that Name, which

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Hiero was then Building, so named from the Mountain: Others say, it was because he was Vanquisht by Simonides in his Elegiac Verse upon the Slain at Marathon. After he had been Resident at Gela Three Years, he dyed of a Fracture of his Skull, caus'd by an Eagles letting fall a Shell-Fish out of his Claw upon his Bald-Head, which seems to have been Portended by the Oracle, which being consulted upon the manner of his Death, Answer'd, Ὄνφάνιον σὲ βέλος κατακτανεῖ, this happen'd in the Sixty Ninth Year of his Age, according to Stanley.

He is mention'd by Horace as the first that Beautified and Adorn'd the Stage.

Next, Aeschylus the different Persons plac'd,
And with a better Masque his Players grac'd:
Upon a Theatre his Verse express'd,
And show'd his Hero with a Buskin dress'd.

Bottaeau's Art of Poetry, pag. 33.

Rimer says, That at Athens (they tell us) the Tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, were Enroll'd with their Laws, and made part of their Statute-Book.
Rim. Short View of Tragedy, pag. 158.

Dryden tells us, That the Poet Eschylus was held in the same Veneration by the Athenians of After-Ages, as Shakespear is with us; and Longinus has judg'd in favour of him, that he had a noble Boldness of Expression, and that his Imaginations were Lusty and Heroick: But on the other side Quintilian affirms, That he was daring to Extravagance. 'Tis certain, says Dryden, that he affected Pompous Words, and that his Sense too often was obscur'd by Figures: But notwithstanding these Imperfections, the Value of his Writings after his Decease was such, that his Country-men Ordain'd an equal Reward

Characters and Censures.

3

Reward to those Poets, who could alter his Plays to be Acted on the Theatre, with those whose Productions were wholly new, and of their own.

Æschylus Writ nothing in Cold Blood, but was always in a Rapture, and in fury with his Audience: The Inspiration was still upon him, he was ever tearing it upon the *Tripos*; or (to run off as madly as he does, from one Similitude to another) he was always at high flood of Passion, even in the dead Ebb, and lowest Water-Mark of the Scene. *Dryd.* Pref. to *Troilus and Cressida*.

Rapin Remarks, That Æschylus had scarce any Principle for Manners, and for the Decencies; his Fables are too Simple, the Contrivance Wretched, the Expression Obscure and intricate; One can scarce Understand any thing of his Tragedy of *Agamemnon*. But because he believ'd, that the Secret of the Theatre is to speak Pompously, he bestow'd all his Art on the Words, without any regard to the Thoughts. Quintilian says, That he is Sublime and Lofty to Extravagance: Indeed, says Rapin, he never Speaks in *Cold-Blood*, and says the most indifferent things in a *Tragic Huff*; Likewise in the Images that he Draws, the Colours are too glaring, and the Strokes too gross. He, who Writes his Life, Relates that in one of the Chorus's of his Tragedy of the *Eumenides*, he so horribly frightened the Audience, that the Spectacle made the Children Swound, and the Women with Child miscarry. To Conclude, his Enthusiasm, it seems, never left him, he is so Exalted, and so little Natural. *Rap.* Reflex. on Aristotle's Book of Poesie, part 2. Sect. xxii.

Borrichius observes, That Æschylus was very full of his Metaphors, which indeed deserve our praise, but yet, he says, they had been much more Commendable, if he had not broke off so abruptly in them.

He also takes notice, That his Epithets are for the most part bold, and daring, as too much favouring of his former Profession, that of a Souldier. **Borrigh.** *Dissert. de Poetis*, pag. 29.

The Author of the *Journal des Scavans*, says, That *Æschylus* is a Poet so hard to be Understood, that even *Salmasius*, who was an excellent Critick, and whose chief delight lay in clearing the difficult Places of the most *Abstruse Authors*, was mightily puzzl'd, and perplext, at the difficulties he met with in *Æschylus*: Which gave him occasion, in one of his Books, to say, That this Poet is more obscure than the Scripture it self.

The same Author of the *Journal* observes, That *Æschylus*, in his Style, flies so very High, and uses such Lofty Expressions, that *Monsieur le Fevre*, in his *Abridgment of the Lives of the Greek Poets*, affirms this to be the only Reason of his having the Reputation of a Drunkard: As if his Discourse seem'd rather to proceed from the Fumes of Wine, than from Solid Reason. But to Conclude, our Author tells us, there are very Fine and Curious Things to be found in this Poet, and that among all the Ancient Tragick Poets, the Greeks had the greatest Value for him. **Gallois** *Journ. des Scav.* du 2. Mars, 1665.

Elian, in his *Various History*, relates, That *Æschylus*, being accus'd for some Impiety in one of his Plays, was Condemn'd to be Ston'd. Whereupon his Younger Brother *Aminias*, shewing his Arm without a hand, which he had lost at the Battle at *Salamis*, did so far influence the Judges, that in a grateful Memory of his good Services, they presently order'd *Æschylus* to be dismiss'd. **Elian**. lib. 5. cap. xix.

Anacreon.

Anacreon was born in *Teos*, a place in the middle of *Ionia*; He flourisht in the 61, and 62 *Olympiad*, as *Eusebius*, and *Suidas* affirm. He was one of the Nine *Lyricks*: And both in his Writings, and whole manner of Life, a merry *Greek*, wanton and amorous. He was very intimate with *Polycrates*, the Tyrant of *Samos*; whom he also celebrates in his Verses. Though aged, he fell in love with *Bathyllus*, a young Boy, of whose hard-heartedness he complains. He wrote in the *Ionick Dialect*.

Several of his Poems are yet extant, most whereof consist of *Drunken Catches*, *Billets doux*, &c.

Monsieur *Bayle* says, That *Sappho* and *Anacreon* are so very much alike in their Humours, and their way of Writing, that it is somewhat difficult to distinguish the One from the Other. 'Tis pity, says he, that they were not co-temporaries, for if they had, they ought to have been *Husband* and *Wife*, that so the World might have seen the effect of two such *Amorous*, and *Delicate Souls*. *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, Novemb. 1684.

Julius Scaliger had so high a value for this Poet, That he tells us, He thought *Anacreon's Verses* sweeter than the best *Indian Sugar*. *Lib. 1. Cap. 44. Poëtices*.

Ælian, in his *Various History*, tells us, That *Hipparchus*, Eldest Son of *Pisistratus*, and the wisest of all the Athenians, did so highly esteem *Anacreon*, that He sent a Gally of fifty Oars to him, with the most obliging Letters in the World, to invite him to *Athens*. *Lib. 8. Cap. 2.*

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Gerardus Johannes Vossius, in his *Institutionum Poeticarum*, lib. 3. pag. 78. assures us, That *Anacreon* pass'd amongst the Greeks for one of the greatest Masters, both in the Art of *Complaisance*, and in the *Softness of Expression*.

Mademoiselle le Fevre, in the *Preface* to her curious Edition of *Anacreon*, says, That his Beauty, and chiefest Excellency lay in imitating *Nature*, and in following *Reason*; that he presented not to the Mind, any *Images*, but such as were *Noble* and *Natural*; and that he always took great care to avoid the *Points*, which were introduc'd in the latter times, contrary to the Practice of all the best Ancient Poets.

Athenæus, that famous Ancient *Critick*, in his *Dipnosophist*, remarks, That notwithstanding the Beauty of *Anacreon's Verse*, yet every body could not relish him, for that his *Odes* were no other than *Drunken Catches*; and that at the same time he commended *Drunkenness*, he would often be so very *Obscene*, that he was not to be endur'd by the *Vertuous* part of Mankind.

He further adds, That *Anacreon* had one humour very ridiculous, which was, that if by great chance it happen'd, he was sober at the time he *Compos'd* his *Verses*, yet, tho' there was no occasion for it, he would be sure to feign himself *Drunk*.

Rapin tells us, That *Anacreon's Odes* are *Flowers*, *Beauties*, and *perpetual Graces*; and that it is so familiar to him to write what is *Natural*, and to the *Life*; he having an *Air* so delicate, so easie, and so graceful; that among all the *Ancients* there is nothing comparable to the method he took, nor to that kind of *Writing* he follow'd. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on Aristotle's *Treat.. of Poesie*, part 2d. Sect. xxx.

Anacreon, in the Eighty Fifth Year of his Age, was choak'd with a *Grape-Stone*. Which gave occasion to Abraham Cowley, to exercise his Wit in these following Lines :

*And whilſt I do thus discover
Th' Ingredients of a happy Lover,
'Tis my Anacreon, for thy sake,
I of the Grape no mention make.
Till my Anacreon by Thee fell,
Cursed Plant, I lov'd thee well,
And 'twas oft my wanton use
To dip my Arrows in thy juice.
Cursed Plant, 'tis true, I see,
The Old report that goes of Thee,
That with Gyants blood the Earth
Stain'd and poys'ned gave Thee birth,
And now thou wreak'st thy ancient spight,
On Men in whom the Gods delight.*

Cowley's Elegy upon Anacreon.

Apollonius Rhodius.

HE was *Callimachus*'s Scholar ; although *Alexandria* was his Countrey, yet he was call'd *Rhodius*, after he came from *Alexandria* to *Rhode*, and liv'd there a long time in great honour. Some tell us, that he succeeded *Eratosthenes* as Library-Keeper at *Alexandria*, in the Reign of *Ptolomy Evergetes*.

He wrote several Pieces, but there are none left, only his *Argonautica* in four Books.

Quintilian

Quintilian, in his *Institut. Oratoriar. lib. X. Cap. 1.* says, That *Apollonius's Argonautica* is no contemptible work; and that in his Stile he observes an exact Medium, which is neither too lofty, nor too mean.

Longinus, in his Treatise *περὶ ὕψους*, is much of the same opinion with *Quintilian*, for he tells us, That *Apollonius* in his *Argonautica* never rises too high, or falls too low, but that he poises himself very exactly; But yet, for all this good Quality, *he thinks* he is infinitely short of *Homer*, take him with all his faults; inasmuch as the sublime, lofty Style, though subject to unevennesses, is to be preferr'd before any other sort.

Lilius Gyraldus, speaking of the *Argonautica*, says, It is a work full of variety, and a very laborious piece; but yet he owns, that in some places it is rough and unpleasant, but not where he describes the *Amours* of *Medea*, for even there *Virgil* thinks him so transcendent, that *he has Copied* many things from thence, inserting them into his own *Amours of Dido*. **Gyrald.** *de Hist. Poet. Dialog. 3.*

Tanaguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgment of the Lives of the Greek Poets*, pag. 147. agrees with *Gyraldus* in what he says relating to *Virgil*; but he can by no means yield to *Longinus's Opinion*, who affirm'd, that never any Man could find fault with the *Oeconomy* of that Work. *He laughs also at those Criticks*, who think, that the Stile is so very equal, soft and easie, saying, That he could never be brought to be of their Judgment; for that, as little as *he understood Greek*, *he thought he could discern some difference of Characters*.

Claudius Verderius, in his *Censio Auctorum*, pag. 46. says, That in the esteem of many Persons, the stile of *Apollonius* was look'd upon to be course and unpolish'd, and

and that he himself saw it ridicul'd upon that very score.

Hence therefore *Borrighius* in his *Dissertat. de Poetis*, pag. 15. tells us, That *Apollonius* finding, that the Verses which he had made in his Youth, were derided and exploded, as not being polish'd enough, he afterwards gave them a new turn, by which means they were thought so polite, as to deserve all Mens Applause.

Rapin, in the 2d. part of his *Reflex. on Aristot. Treatise of Poesie*, *Sect. XV.* remarks, That the Poem of *Apollonius Rhodius*, on the *Expedition of the Argonauts*, is of a slender Character, and has nothing of that nobleness of expression, which *Homer* has; that the *Fable* is ill invented, and the List of the *Argonauts* in the first Book *Flat*.

Aratus

WA S born at *Soli* or *Soloe*, a Town of *Cilicia*; afterwards call'd *Pompeiopolis*; he was Physician to *Antigonus*, King of *Macedon*; A most learned Poet, and one that wrote diverse things, amongst others a Book of *Astronomy*, called *φαινόμενα*, in which he elegantly describes in *Heroick Verse* the whole Frame of the *Celestial Sphere*, the Image, Figure, Rising and Setting of all the Stars therein. He flourish'd in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, in the cxxvi. Olympiad.

Claudius and *Germanicus Cæsar*, were so delighted with *Aratus's φαινόμενα*, that they, each of Them, Translated it into *Latin*: As did also *M. Tullius Cicero*, when he was

very young. And beside these, *Festus Avienus* turn'd it into Elegant Latin Verse.

Ovid, speaking of this Author, gives us his Character in these words, alluding to his *φαινόμενα*:

Cum Sole & Lunâ semper Aratus erit.

Viz. That as long as *Sun* and *Moon* endur'd, so long would the Fame of *Aratus* continue.

Cicero, in his first Book *De Oratore*, tells us, That the Verses of *Aratus* were very fine and Elegant, but that he had little skill in *Astrology*.

Quintilian, in his *Institution. Oratoriar. lib. x. cap. 1.* says, That the Verses of *Aratus* are without Life or Spirit, and that they have not those Ornaments, nor that Poetical variety, which uses to affect the Reader: And yet he tells us, He was a person proper enough for the Work he undertook.

Gerardus Vossius, in his Book *De Scientiis Mathematicis*, affirms, That *Aratus* was formerly, and is still, of very great Authority among *Astronomers*.

The Authority of *Aratus* was esteem'd so sacred among the *Ancients*, that we find him quoted by St. *Paul* himself, *Acta the xvii. Verse the 28.*

There is not any thing a greater Demonstration of the Credit of this Author, than the vast Number of his *Commentators*.

Macrobius, in his *Saturnal. lib. v. cap 2.* says, That *Virgil* in his *Georgicks* borrow'd several Things from *Aratus's φαινόμενα*.

Aristophanes.

A *Aristophanes* was a famous Comick Poet, but of his Country nothing is certain: Some say he was an *Athenian*, others a *Rhodian*, and some an *Egyptian*. He was contemporary with *Sophocles* the *Tragick Poet*, and also with *Socrates*, whom he makes an Object of his Wit in his Comedy call'd *Nubes*; as he doth *Cleon* and *Nicias*, two Magistrates of *Athens*, in his *Equites* and *Georgia*; He flourish'd from the *Eighty fifth* to the *Ninety first Olympiad*, and wrote, according to *Suidas*, no less than fifty four Comedies, whereof we have now but *Eleven* left, viz. *Plutus*, *Nubes*, *Ranæ*, *Equites*, *Acharnenses*, *Vespæ*, *Aves*, *Pax*, *Concionatrices*, *Cerealia Festa celebrantes*, *Lysistrata*. To conclude, He was the chief Writer of the Old Comedy, as *Menander* of the New.

In this Author are to be found all the Ornaments of the *Attick Dialect*, which made St. *Chrysostome* so much admire him, that whenever he went to sleep, he still laid him under his Pillow.

Let no Man, says *Joseph Scaliger*, in the first part of *Scaligerana*, pretend to understand the *Attick Dialect*, who has not *Aristophanes* at his fingers ends. pag. 23.

Tanaquillus Faber, in his Notes upon the fore-mention'd place, tells us, how much he is in love with *Scaliger* for saying this. The truth on't is, says *Faber*, I have spent above fifteen Years to understand this Author, nor do I think I have cause to repent it.

Lilius Gyraldus informs us, That *Aristophanes* was reputed the most Eloquent of all the *Athenians*, and that they look'd upon him to be the most Considerable of their *Beaux Esprits*; That he abounds with fine, cu-

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rious Sentences; *That* there is in his Invention a variety that is surprising, but yet agreeable; and, *that* he understood how to give every thing its *turn*, which, as *Gyraldus* tells us, gave him the preference from all the other Comick Poets.

Mademoiselle le Fevre, in the *Preface* to her Edition of *Aristophenus*, remarks, that one may find in this Author, some Instructions, that may be of great use both to the *Politician* and the *Souldier*. For it seems, these *Comedies* of his, did as it were represent to the *Athenians* the whole State of their Affairs. And therefore well might *Plato*, writing to *Dionysius the Tyrant*, tell him, *That* if he had a mind to have an exact Scheme of the Condition of the *Athenians*, he need only read the Works of *Aristophanes*.

He assembl'd his Spectators, says *Mademoiselle le Fevre*, *not to fawn upon them and flatter them, or to divert them with Buffoonry and Fooleries*; *but to give 'em solid Instructions*, which he knew how to make them relish, by seasoning them with a thousand pleasant Inventions, which no body but himself was able to do.

Never any Man, says the same *le Fevre* in her said *Preface*, had better skill in discerning the *Ridiculous* part, nor a *turn* more Ingenious to make it appear. His *Criticks* are natural and easie; and, which does not often happen, notwithstanding he is so Copious, he still sustains the delicacy of his Character.

She adds, *That* the *Attick Spirit*, which the *Ancients* have so much bragg'd of, appears more in *Aristophanes*, than in any other Author of Antiquity, that *She* knows of; *but, that what is most to be admir'd in him, is, that he is always so absolute a Master of the Matter he treats of, that, with all the ease imaginable, he finds a way*
how

how to make those very things, which at first might appear the most remote from his *Subject*, fall in naturally; and, that, even his most lively, and least expected *Caprices*, seem'd but as the natural Results of those *Incidents* he had prepar'd.

She further tells us, That nothing can be more Ingenious, than the whole Contexture of the *Comedy* call'd *Nubes*; And that the chief thing therein, which *She* most admires at, is, That *Aristophanes* has so well hit the *Air* and *Humour* of *Socrates* in the *Ridiculous* part; which is done so *naturally*, that a Man would really think he heard *Socrates* himself speak. *She* says, she was so much Charm'd with this Piece, that after she had Translated it, and had read it two hundred times over, she did not find her self in the least cloy'd, which was more than she could say of any other Piece besides.

To conclude, *Mademoiselle le Fevre* speaking of the *Style* of *Aristophanes*, says, *This* is as agreeable as his *Wit*. For besides its purity, force, and sweetness, it has a certain Harmony, which sounds so pleasant to the Ear, that the very *Reading* him is extreamly delightful. At any time, when he has occasion to make use of the common ordinary *Stile*, he does it without using any Expression that is base and vulgar; and when he has a mind to expresf himself in the lofty *Style*, in his highest flight he is never obscure; In a word, *She* tells us, No person ever understood how to make use of all the different Sorts of *Style*, like *Aristophanes*. *Ann. le Fevre's Pref.* to her *French Translat.* of the Two *Comedies* of *Aristophanes*.

Rimer tells us, That *Aristophanes* was a Man of wonderful Zeal for Virtue, and the good of his Countrey; that he laid about him with an undaunted Resolution, as it

it were some *Christian Martyr*, for his Faith and Religion. He plainly ran a Muck at all manner of Vice where ever he saw it, be it in the greatest *Philosophers*, the greatest *Poets*, the *Generals*, or the *Ministers of State*.

The *Persian Ambassador*, who was *Lieger* there (as formerly the *French* with us) seeing the Town all at his beck; and the *Government* taking Aim, Turning out, Disgracing, Impeaching, Banishing, Out-Lawing, and Attainting the great *Men*, according as he hinted, or held up the Finger; the Ambassador, not understanding the *Athenian Temper*, says *Rimer*, was astonish'd at the *Man*. And, for all the *Democracy*, no less bold was he with his *Sovereign, Legislative People*: Representing them, taking Bribes, selling their Votes, bought off. He tells 'em (as the practice amongst them) that the *Government* had no occasion for Men of *Wit* or *Honesty*. The most Ignorant, the most Impudent, and the greatest Rogue stood fairest always for a Place, and the best qualified to be their Chief Minister. He tells 'em, nothing shall fright him; *Truth* and *Honesty* are on his side; he has the *Heart of Hercules*, will speak what is Just and Generous, tho' *Cerberus*, and all the Kennel of Hell-Hounds were loo'd upon him. But then (says *Rimer*) his Address was Admirable: He would make the *Truth* Visible and Palpable, and every way sensible to them. The Art and the Application; his strange Fetches, his lucky Stars; his odd Inventions, the wild Turns, Returns, and Counter-turns (says *Rimer*) were never match'd, nor are ever to be reach'd again. *Rim. Short View of Tragedy, chap. 2. pag. 22, 23.*

Rapin Remarks, That *Aristophanes* is not exact in the Contrivance of his *Fables*, and that his *Fictions* are not very probable; that he Mocks Persons too grossely,

grossely, and too openly. *Socrates*, whom he Plays upon so eagerly in his *Comedies*, (says *Rapin*) had a more delicate *Air of Raillery* than he; but was not so shameless. It is true, *Aristophanes* Writ during the Disorder and Licentiousness of the *Old Comedy*, and that he understood the Humour of the *Athenian People*, who were easily disgusted with the Merit of extraordinary Persons, whom he set his Wit to abuse, that he might please *that People*. After all, says *Rapin*, he often is no otherwise pleasant, than by his *Buffoonry*. That *Ragouſt*, Compos'd of Seventy Six Syllables in the last Scene of his *Comedy* the *Ecclesiasousai*, would not (says *Rapin*) go down with us in our Age. His Language is often obscure, blunder'd, low, trivial; and his frequent jingling upon Words, his Contradictions of opposite Terms each to other; the Hotchpotch of his Stile, of *Tragick* and *Comick*, of Serious and Buffoon, of Grave and Familiar, is unseemly; and his *Witticisms* often, when well Examin'd, prove false. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Aristot.* *Treatise of Poesie*, par. 2. sect. xxvi.

Aristotle,

TH E Famous Philosopher of *Stagira*; who, besides the many other Works he Wrote, is said, according to *Diogenes Laertius*, to have Written as many Poems, as contain Forty Five Thousand, Three Hundred, and Thirty Verses. But had he never Compos'd any Poem, yet certainly that most Incomparable Piece of *His*, concerning the *Art of Poetry*, which by all the World is counted

counted the best *Model* for *Poets* to follow, may well allow him to be Rank'd amongst the most Considerable *Poets*.

He Died, according to *Calvicius*, in the Sixty Third Year of his Age, Three Hundred and Nineteen Years before *Christ*.

I find there are some *Criticks*, and among others *Petrus Victorius*, in his *Comment* upon *Aristotle's Art of Poetry*, who think, that this Piece of *Aristotle's* was never finish'd, nor perfected; and, in all probability, the ground of this Opinion, was, because they did not find, that *Aristotle* had writ any thing concerning *Comedy*, as a late *Anonymous Author* has observ'd in his *Bibliograph. curios. Histor. Philolog. &c. pag. 45.* But the Learned *Gerardus Johannes Vossius*, in his *De Natura Artis Poeticæ*, cap. v. pag. 28. is of the contrary Opinion, viz. That *Aristotle* had finish'd, and given the last strokes to this most Excellent Work; And this, says *Vossius*, may easily be prov'd by that *curious Method*, and *admirable concatenation*, which he hath observ'd from first to last.

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, That *Aristotle* was not only the *Master* and *Patriarch* of *Philosophy*, *Logick*, and *Rhetorick*, but also, that he was greatly skill'd in *Poetry*, both in respect of the *Art*, and the *Composing of Verses*.

Rimer says, That *Aristotle* was the very first that Antiquity honour'd with the Name of *Critick*.

It is indeed suspected, that he dealt not always fairly with the *Philosophers*, mis-reciting sometimes, and misinterpreting their Opinions. But (says *Rimer*) I find him not tax'd of that injustice to the *Poets*, in whose favour he is so Ingenious, that to the disadvantage of his own Profession, he declares, That *Tragedy more conduces to the*

the Instruction of Mankind, than even Philosophy it self. And hower Aristotle may be cry'd down in the Schools, and vilified by some Modern Philosophers; yet since Men have had a taste for good Sense, and could discern the Beauties of corre&t Writing, he is preferr'd in the politest Courts of Europe, and by the Poet's held in great Veneration. Not that these can servilely yield to his Authority, who, of all Men living, affect Liberty. The truth is, (says Rimer) what Aristotle Writes on this Subject, are not the Dictates of his own Magis-
trial-Will, or dry Deductions of his Metaphysics? But the Poets were his Masters, and what was their Practice, he reduced to Principles. Nor would the Modern Poets, blindly resign to this Practice of the Ancients, were not the Reasons convincing and clear as any Demonstration in Mathematicks. 'Tis only needful that we understand them, for our Consent to the Truth of them. *Rsm. Pref. to his Translat. of Rapin's Reflex. on Aristot. of Poesie.*

Rapin tells us, That Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie, to speak properly, is nothing else, but Nature put in Method, and good Sense reduc'd to Principles. There is no arriving at Perfection but by these Rules, and they certainly go astray that take a different Course. What faults have not most of the Italian, Spanish, and other Poets fallen into, through their Ignorance of these Principles? And if a Poem, (says Rapin) made by these Rules, fails of Success, the fault lies not in the Art, but in the Artist; all who have Writ of this Art, have follow'd no other Idea, but that of Aristotle. *Rap. Advertism. before his Reflex. on Arist.*

The Learned *Anonymous German Author*, in his *Bibliograph. Curios. Histor. Philolog. &c.* pag. 45. calls Aristotle's Art of Poetry a Golden Fragment, containing most Admirable Remarks, relating to the Rules of true Grammar, and the soundest Maxims of Rhetorick. He adds, That the little which is left concerning *Tragedy* is Incomparable, and that one can hardly find among the *Ancients* any thing that is of a better taste.

But notwithstanding the general Vogue, that this Treatise of Aristotle has had in the World, yet that great Critick *Julus Scaliger*, in the Epistle to his Son *Sylvius*, before his *Poëtica*, has different Sentiments, for he calls it a Lame and Imperfect Work; and that if it were not for Respect to that *Philosopher*, he tells us, he could say a great deal more. But the Learned *Gerardus Johannes Vossius*, in the Preface to his *Institutiones Poëticæ*, falls upon Scaliger for this Opinion, saying, That he can by no means think this Treatise of Aristotle so despisable a Work; That, for his part, he did not know any thing Writ by the *Ancients* upon this Subject, that did come up to it; And that such Modern Writers as have Treated of the *Art of Poetry*, have still got more or less Reputation, in proportion to their Observing or not Observing that Excellent Model, given by Aristotle.

Decius Magnus Ausonius,

WAS Born at Bourdeaux in France. He was Præceptor to Gratian the Emperour, by whom he was made Consul, in the Year 379. Bellarmin, Gyraldus, and some others, suppose him to have been a Christian, but Gerard Vossius positively affirms, that he was a Heathen.

He Writ several Things in Verse, and some in Prose.

Johannes Ludovicus Vives, in his Third Book *De Trandendis Disciplinis*, tells us, That Ausonius is every where so full of Wit and Smartness, that he never suffers his Reader to fall asleep.

Johannes Brodæus, lib. 1. *Miscellan.* cap. vi. says, That he does not think Ausonius's Stile so impolite, as those do, who, by way of Reproach, call him *Ferreum Scriptorem*, a Writer as hard as Iron.

Erasmus in *Dialogo Ciceroniano*, pag. 149. allows, That Ausonius had both Wit and Learning; but that his Style was every whit as loose and effeminate, as his Life; and that he was so far from having the least favour of Ciceron's Style, that one might as well call a German a French-Man, as call Ausonius Ciceronian.

Olaus Borrichius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. de Poetis*, pag. 73. affirms, That all the Works of Ausonius were elaborate, choice, and ingenious; but that he could not always free himself from the Dregs of the Age he liv'd in.

Joseph Scaliger, in his Notes upon *Virgil*, tells us, That Ausonius was the most Learned of all the Poets

from *Domitian* down to that time, and that it is very well worth any Man's while to read him.

Caspar Barthius, in his Third Book *Adversar. cap. vii.* says, That he will bear *Ausonius* Witness, that whatsoever is to be found in him, ought to be look'd upon as true and good *Latin*; for that he never set down any thing, but he had some example from the *Ancients* for his Authority.

He also tells us, That *Ausonius* was too Learned for the Age he liv'd in, and that the Authors which he took most delight in Reading, were lost.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poética, cap. v.* observes to us, That *Ausonius* was one of a great, and an acute Wit; but that his Stile is somewhat harsh; That he is not all of a Piece; That he has Writ on several Subjects, but not alwyas with the same success; and that therefore we are not to Judge of him, from what he hath done; but from what he could have done. He wishes, That *Ausonius* had never Writ any of his *Epigrams*; since, in his opinion, there is not one of them that is finish'd and polish'd as it ought to be; nay, he says, some are impertinent, cold, and frivolous; for that, whenever he Translated from the *Greek*, he never minded to carry the Original Beauty into the *Latin*: Others are so filthy and abominable, that they rather deserve the *Flame*, than the *Sponge*.

He adds, that this Author was very careless and negligent, and therefore it is, that we find many of his *Iambicks*, which though at the beginning seem pure and elaborate, yet in the conclusion they prove foulent, and full of dregs.

As for his other *Poems*, says *Scaliger*, viz. his *Gryphus de Numero Ternario*, and his *Eclogues*, they are indeed very

very good, and must be allow'd to be writ by one who had a great skill in Poetry.

But the most celebrated Piece of *Ausonius*, in the Opinion of *Scaliger*, is his Poem upon the *Moselle*; This, saith he, was so elaborate a Work, that had *Ausonius* writ nothing else, this would have been sufficient to have got him the Character of a Great Poet; there being in it a great deal of Art, Method, Fine Language, Genius, Candor, and Sharpness. *Jul. Scalig. lib. vi. Poetices, cap. v.*

Lilius Gyraldus says, That tho' *Ausonias* was a *Christian*, yet in his Writings he was often so Obscene and Lascivious, that he did not deserve to be reckon'd among the *Christians*.

He says, There's a great deal of Learning in the *Gryphus*, and also abundance of curious Variety; but *that* he does not find there is much either of *Judgment*, or of *Elegancy* in it.

Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher.

MR. *Beaumont's* Parentage, Birth, Country, Education, and Death, are wholly unknown to Me; And as to Mr. *Fletcher*, all I know of him is, That he was Son to the Eminent Dr. *Richard Fletcher*, who was created *Bishop of Bristol* by Queen *Elizabeth*, *Ann. 1559.* and by her preferr'd to *London*, *1593.* He dyed in *London* of the *Plague*, *Anno. 1625.* being Nine and Forty Years of Age, and was buried in *St. Mary-Overies Church in Southwark*.

There

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There are Two and Fifty Plays written by these worthy Authors ; all which are now extant in one Volume. Printed in Fol. Lond. 1679.

Winstanley tells us, That Beaumont and Fletcher joyned together, made one of the happy *Triumvirate* (the other two being Johnson and Shakespear) of the chief Dramatick Poets of our Nation, in the last foregoing Age ; among whom there might be said to be a *Symmetry of Perfection*, while each excell'd in his peculiar way : Ben. Jonson in his elaborate Pains and Knowledge of Authors ; Shakespear in his pure Vein of Wit, and natural Poetick Height ; Fletcher in a Courtly Elegance, and Genteel Familiarity of Style, and withal a Wit and Invention so over-flowing, that the Luxuriant Branches thereof were frequently thought convenient to be lopt off by Beaumont ; which Two joyned together, like Castor and Pollux (most happy when in Conjunction) raised the English to equal the Athenian and Roman Theaters. Winstanley, of the most famous English Poets.

Dryden says, That Beaumont and Fletcher had, with the advantage of Shakespear's Wit, which was their precedent, great Natural Gifts, improv'd by Study. Beaumont especially being so accurate a Judge of Plays, that Ben. Johnson, while he liv'd, submitted all his Writings to his Censure, and, 'tis thought, us'd his judgment in Correcting, if not contriving all his Plots. What value he had for him, appears by the Verses he writ to him ; and therefore (says Dryden) I need speak no farther of it. The first Play that brought Fletcher and him in esteem, was their *Philaster* ; for before that, they had written two or three very unsuccessfully : As the like is reported of Ben. Johnson, before he writ *Every Man in his Humour*. Their Plots were generally more regular than

than Shakespear's, especially those which were made before Beaumont's death; and they understood and imitated the Conversation of Gentlemen much better; whose wild Debaucherries, and quickness of Wit in Repartees, no Poet before them could paint as they have done. Humour, which Ben Johnson deriv'd from particular Persons, they made it not their business to describe: They represented all the Passions very lively, but above all, Love. I am apt to believe, says Dryden, the English Language in them arriv'd to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in, are rather superfluous than ornamental. Their Plays are now the most pleasant and frequent Entertainments of the Stage; two of theirs being acted through the Year for one of Shakespear's or Johnson's: The reason is, says Dryden, because there is a certain gayetie in their Comedies, and Pathos in their more serious Plays, which suits generally with all Mens Humours. Shakespear's Language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben. Johnson's Wit comes short of theirs.

Dryd. *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, pag. 34.

'Tis one of the Excellencies of Shakespear, that the Manners of his Persons are generally apparent; and you see their bent and Inclinations Fletcher comes far short of him in this, as indeed he does almost in every thing, says Dryden: There are but glimmerings of Manners in most of his Comedies, which run upon Adventures: And in his Tragedies, Rollo, Otto, the King and No King, Melantius, and many others of his best, are but Pictures shown you in the twi light; you know not whether they resemble Vice or Virtue, and they are either good, bad, or indifferent, as the present Scene requires it. But of all Poets, this Commendation is to be given to Ben. Johnson, that the Manners even of the most inconsiderable

siderable Persons in his Plays are every where apparent.

Dryd. Pref. to *Troilus and Cressida*.

The Characters of Fletcher are poor and narrow, in Comparison of Shakespear's; I remember not one (says Dryden) which is not borrowed from him; unless you will except that strange mixture of a Man in the King and No King: So that in this part Shakespear is generally worth our Imitation; and to imitate Fletcher is but to Copy after him who was a Copyer. **Dryd.** *ibid.*

The Excellency of Shakespear was in the more manly Passions; Fletcher's in the softer: Shakespear writ better betwixt Man and Man; Fletcher, betwixt Man and Woman: Consequently, the One describ'd Friendship better; the other Love: Yet Shakespear taught Fletcher to write Love; and Juliet, and Desdemona, are Originals. 'Tis true, says Dryden, the Scholar had the Softer Soul; but the Master had the Kinder. Friendship is both a Virtue, and a Passion essentially; Love is a Passion only in its Nature, and is not a Virtue but by Accident: Good nature makes Friendship; but Eſternancy Love. Shakespear had an Universal Mind, which comprehended all Characters and Passions; Fletcher a more confin'd, and limited: For though he treated Love in perfection, yet Honour, Ambition, Revenge, and generally all the stronger Passions, he either touch'd not, or not Masterly. To conclude all; He was a Limb of Shakespear. **Dryd.** Pref. to *Troilus and Cressida*.

Fletcher, to thee, we do not only owe
 All these good Plays, but those of others too;
 Thy Wit repeated, does support the Stage,
 Credits the last, and entertains this Age;
 No Worthies form'd by any Muse but thine,
 Could purchase Robes, to make themselves so fine.

What

What brave Commander is not proud to see
 Thy brave Melantius in his Gallantry?
 Our greatest Ladies love to see their Scorn
 Out-done by thine, in what themselves have worn;
 Th' impatient Widow e're the Tear be done,
 Sees thy Alspasia weeping in her Gown.
 I never yet the Tragick strain essay'd,
 Deterr'd by that inimitable Maid:
 And when I venture at the Comick stile,
 Thy Scornful Lady seems to mock my toil.
 Thus has thy Muse, at once, improv'd and marr'd
 Our sport in Plays, by rendring it too hard;
 So when a sort of lusty Shepherds throw
 The Bar by Turns, and none the rest out-goe
 So far, but that the best are measuring casts,
 Their emulation, and their pastime lasts;
 But if some brawny Yeoman of the Guard
 Step in, and toss the Axe-tree a yard,
 Or more, beyond the farthest Mark, the rest
 Despairing stand, their Sport is at the best.

Edm. Waller.

How I do love thee Beaumont, and thy Muse,
 That unto Me do'st such Religion use!
 How I do fear my self, that am not worth
 The least indulgent Thought thy Pen drops forth!
 At once thou mak'st me happy, and unmak'st;
 And giving largely to Me, more thou tak'st.
 What Fate is mine, that so it self bereaves?
 What Art is thine, that so thy Friend deceives?
 When even there where most thou praisest Me,
 For Writing better, I must envy Thee.

Ben. Johnson.

I need not raise
Trophies to Thee from other Mens dispraise ;
Nor is thy Fame on lesser Ruines built,
Nor needs thy juster Title the foul guilt
Of Eastern Kings, who to secure their Reign,
Must have their Brothers, Sons, and Kindred slain.
Then was Wits Empire at the Fatal height,
When labouring and sinking with its weight,
From thence a Thousand lesser Poets sprung,
Like petty Princes from the fall of Rome.
When Johnson, Shakespear, and thy self did sit,
And sway'd in the Triumvirate of Wit —
Yet what from Johnson's Oil, and Sweat did flow,
Or what more easie Nature did bestow
On Shakespear's gentle Muse, in Thee full grown
Their Graces both appear, yet so, that none
Can say here Nature ends, and Art begins,
But mixt like th' Elements, and born like Twins ;
So interweav'd, so like, so much the same,
None, this meer Nature, that meer Art can name :
'Twas this the Ancients meant ; Nature and Skill
Are the two tops of their Parnassus Hill.

J. Denham on Fletcher's Works.

He that hath such Acuteness, and such Wit,
As would ask Ten good Heads to husband it ;
He that can Write so well, that no Man dare
Refuse it for the best, let him beware :

Beaumont is dead ! by whose sole Death appears,
Wit's a Disease consumes Men in few Tears.

Rich. Corbet, D. D. on Mr. Francis Beaumont.
(Then newly Dead.)

Ludovico Ariosto,

BORN in Ferrara, One of the two most Celebrated Heroick Poets of Italy; and thereupon Competitor with *Torquato Tasso* the other. He died the 13th of July, 1533. In the fifty ninth Year of his Age. He wrote some Latin Poems, which are inserted in the first Tome of the *Deliciæ Italorum Poetarum*. They are there mixt, and confounded with the Works of several other Poets of no great Note: But his Italian Poems had a better fate, for they being more valu'd and esteem'd, were Printed by themselves. The chief of his Italian Poems are, 1. His Satyrs, which, at their first coming into the World, had a Vogue, but in this Age they are not much valu'd. 2. His Comedies, whereof the most famous are *Il Negromante*, *La Cassaria*, *Gli Suppositi*, *La Lena*, and *La Scolastica*. But that which most contributed to *Ariosto's* Fame, was his Heroick Poem of *Orlando Furioso*, wherein he takes his Argument from the Expedition of the Emperour Charles the Great against the Saracens in Spain; This Poem cost *Ariosto* twenty Years Labour; though, as the Story goes, *Cardinal d'Est*, to whom it was Dedicated, had so mean an Opinion of it, that he cry'd out to *Ariosto*, *Dove. Diavolo, Messer Ludovico, avete pigliate tante Coglionierie, Whence, the Devil, Master Lewis, hast thou taken all these Fooleries?*

Paulus Jovius, in his Elogies of Learned Men, says, That of all the Comedies of *Ariosto*, the *Suppositi* ought to be preferr'd; scarce inferiour to those of *Plautus*, for Invention, and its various Beauties and Graces.

28 Characters and Censures.

Joh. Ant. Bumaldus, otherwise call'd Ovidius Montalbanus, in his *Bibliotheca Bononiensis*, tells us, That all the Comedies of Ariosto were writ with exquisite Art; and that his Epick Poem of *Orlando Furioso* was so Universally esteem'd of, that it had been Translated into most of the Languages of Europe.

Rapin, in the first part of his *Reflections* on Aristotle's Book of *Poetie*, sect. 2. remarks, That Ariosto has too much Flame. And Section xi, he takes notice, into what Enormities Petrarch hath run in his *Africa*; Ariosto in his *Orlando Furioso*; Cavalier Marino in his *Adonis*, and all the other Italians who were ignorant of Aristotle's Rules; and follow'd no other Guides but their own Genius and Capricious Fancy: The truth is, says Rapin, the Wits of Italy were so prepossess'd in favour of the Romantick Poetry of Pulci, Boyardo and Ariosto, that they regarded no other Rules, than what the Heat of their Genius inspir'd.

The same Author in the Second part of those *Reflections*, Sect. 8. observes, That Ariosto's *Episodes* are too Affected, never probable, never prepar'd, and often without any dependance on his Subject, as that of King *Agaramante* and *Marfisa*; but these things are not to be expected from a Poem, where the Heroes are *Paladins*: And where predominates an Air of Chimerical and Romantick *Knight-Errantry*, rather than any Heroick Spirit.

But, to conclude, Rapin, Sect. 16 tells us, That Ariosto had somewhat more of an Epick Poem than the rest of the Italians, because he had read Homer and Virgil; He is pure, Great, Sublime, admirable in the Expression; His Descriptions are Master-pieces; but he has no judgment at all; his Wit (says Rapin) is like the fruitful Ground, that together produces *Flowers* and *Thistles*;

He

He speaks well, but thinks ill, and tho' all the Pieces of his Poem are pretty, yet the whole Work together is nothing worth, for an Epick Poem : He had not then seen the Rules of Aristotle, as Tasso did afterwards, who is better than Ariosto, says Rapin, whatever the Academy of Florence say to the Contrary.

Dryden, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of Dorset before the *Translation* of Juvenal, pag. 7. says, That Ariosto, an Epick Poet, neither Design'd Justly, nor Observ'd any Unity of Action, or Compass of Time, or Moderation in the Vastness of his Draught ; His Style, says Dryden, is Luxurious, without Majesty, or decency ; And his Adventures, without the Compass of Nature and Possibility.

Sir Will. Temple, in his *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 46. Remarks, That, Ariosto and Tasso enter'd boldly upon the Scene of Heroick Poems, but having not Wings for so High Flights, began to learn of the Old ones, fell upon their Imitations, and chiefly of Virgil, as far as the Force of their Genius, or Disadvantage of New Languages and Customs would allow.

John Boccace,

A Most generally known and extolled Florentine Writer, and worthily Rank'd among the Poets, not only for his *Bucolicks*, but several other Writings of a Poetical Nature, as his *Genealogia di Dei*, his *Huomini Illustri*, his *Decameron*, his *Novels*, &c. besides which he Wrote several other Things both *Historical* and *Geographical*.
He

He was Born at *Certaldum*, a Town belonging to the Dutcheys of *Florence*, in the Year 1314. He dyed in the Year 1375. or, according to *Vossius*, 1376.

Johannes Tritheimius, in his *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, says, That *Boccace*, in Secular Learning, far Exceeded all of that Age, and that he was not altogether unskill'd in Matters of Divinity.

He further says, That he was both a *Poet*, a *Philosopher*, and an Excellent *Astronomer*; and that he was a Man of a quick, ready Wit, and a good *Orator*.

Janus Jacobus Boissardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illustrium*, tells us, That *Boccace* has Written several Pieces; all which do sufficiently shew both the great Learning, and the indefatigable pains of the Author.

Gerardus Johannes Vossius, lib. iii. *De Historicis Latinis*, cap. i. speaking of *Boccace's Genealogia Deorum*, says, That very Book got him a great Reputation, both for Learning and Industry.

But the Learned *Konigius*, in his *Bibliotheca*, tells us, That some think, this was none of his own, and that he only transcrib'd it.

Isaac Bullart, in his *Academie des Sciences*, says, That the most considerable of all *Boccace's Works* was his *Decameron*, which had been receiv'd with the Universal Applause of all Italy; and that it was so well approv'd of in Foreign Parts, that it was Translated into almost all Languages; and that the more it was suppress'd, and censur'd, by reason of some severe Reflections upon the Monks, the more it was desir'd, and sought after.

Lilius Gyraldus Remarks, That *Petrarch* and *Boccace* had a *Poetical Genius*, but *that* they did not shew either Judgment or Accuracy in their *Poems*, which unhappiness he chiefly ascrib'd to the Age they liv'd in.

Erasmus in Ciceroniano, pag. 155. says, That *Blondus* and *Boccace* were inferior to *Petrarch*, both as to the force and energy of Stile, and also the Purity and Propriety of the *Latin Tongue*.

Ludovicus Vives, lib. 3. *De Tradendis Disciplinis*, tells us, That *Boccace* was *Petrarch's Scholar*, and *that* he was in no respect to be compared with his *Master*.

But in another Place he Remarks, That *Boccace's Genealogia Deoram*, was a Work much beyond the Age he liv'd in; though he own'd, he was sometimes very Dull and Tedious in his *Mythological Expositi-*
ons.

Salvati, in his *Preface to the Italian Grammar of the Port-Royal*, pag. 6. observes, That *Boccace* was much the more Correct, and Natural in his *Prose*, than in his *Verse*.

And *Paulus Jovius* tells us, It was the common saying in his time, That as *Petrarch* had but ill luck in *Prose*, so *Boccace* was Unfortunate in *Verse*.

Rapin Observes to us, That *Boccace* Wrote with great Purity in his own Tongue; but *that* he was too trivial and familier, to deserve the Name of an *Heroick Poet*. *Rap.* *Reflex. on Aristot. Treat. of Poesie*, part 2. Sect. 16.

He also in another place Remarks, That *Boccace's Wit* is just, but not Copious. *Rap.* *Ibid.* part 1. Sect. 2.

And

And, to conclude, He accuses him of great Vanity, in making himself the constant Subject of his Discourse.

Boccace's *Decads*, or *Novels*, are Prohibited by the Church of Rome, being inserted in the *Index Expurgatorius*. Printed in Octavo, 1681. at Rome.

George Buchanan,

AN Excellent Latin Poet, Born in a Village, in the Province of Lennox, in Scotland, Anno Dom. 1506. about the beginning of February. He died at Edinburgh, in the Year 1582. the 28th. day of December.

Buchanan, a Man born, as he himself hath Written in a Poem, *Nec Cælo, nec Solo, nec Seculo eruditus*, that is, neither in a Climate, nor Country, nor Age of any Learning; yet, says Cambden, happily arriving himself at the Top and Perfection of Poetical skill, so as He may deservedly be reckon'd Prince of the Poets of this Age. **Cambden's Annals, 1582.**

Thuanus, in his most incomparable History, tells us, That Buchanan had not his Fellow in the Age he Liv'd, either in respect of his natural Wit, or of the excellent Talent he had in Writing; which even his Works, which in spite of envy or Malice will survive as long as the World endures, do sufficiently demonstrate **Thuan. Ad Annum, 1582.**

Turnebus, in his *Adversar. lib. I. cap. 2.* says, he believes, there is no Man in France, who has had any thing of Education.

Education, or Breeding, but is acquainted with George Buchanan, who is not only an Excellent Poet, but one who is thoroughly skill'd in all sorts of Learning.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. positively affirms, That Buchanan, for Latin Verse, excels all the Poets in Europe.

Father Vavassir the Jesuit, in his *Remarq. anonym. sur les Reflex. touchant la Poétique*, pag. 66. tells us, That of all the Poets who have writ in Latin, he knew no Man who was more a Master of his own Idea's, nor who could with more ease command his Style, and his Expressions, than Buchanan.

Dr. Burnet, in his *Hist. of the Reform.* takes notice, That among Tho're who were at this time (1541) in hazard; George Buchanan was one. The Clergy were resolv'd to be reveng'd on him, for the sharpness of the Poems he had written against them: And the King had so absolutely left all Men to their Mercy, that he had died with the rest, if he had not made his escape out of Prison: Then he went beyond Sea, and liv'd twenty Years in that Exile, and was forc'd to teach a School most part of the time; yet the greatness of his Mind, says Burnet, was not oppress'd with that mean Employment. In his Writings there appears, not only all the Beauty and Graces of the Latin Tongue, but a Vigor of Mind and Quickness of Thought, far beyond Bembo, or the other Italians, who at that time affected to revive the purity of the Roman Style. It was but a feeble imitation of Tully in them; but his Style is so natural and nervous, and his Reflexions on Things are so solid, (besides his Immortal Poems, in which he shews how well he could imitate all the Roman Poets, in their several ways of Writing, that he who compares them, will be often tempted to prefer the Copy to the Original,) that

he is justly reckon'd the Greatest and Best of our Modern Authors. *Burnet's Hist. of the Reform.* Book 3d, pag. 311.

Borrichius tells us, That the Poems of George Buchanan, the Scotchman, have through their great variety of Matter, the beauty of their Style, the lustre of their Figures, and an unaffected observance of a *Decorum*, gain'd him the love and praise of almost all Learned Men. It was a high Character, that Joseph Scaliger gave of Buchanan, in that *Distich* of his :

*Imperii fuerat Romani Scotia finis,
Romani eloquii Scotia finis erit.*

With how much Devotion, but yet how neatly, does he play upon David's Harp? How florid are his Elegies? How full of gravity are those *Tragedies* of his, *Jephte*, and *Baptista*? How splendid are his five Books *De Spæra Mundi*? How elegant is he in his *Lyrics*, *Miscellanies*, and *Epigrams*? And to conclude, How sharp and Satirical are his *Franciscanus & Fratres*? *Borrich.* *Dissertat. Academ. de Poetis*, pag. 150.

Beza, in a Letter to Buchanan, says, It was incredible, the pleasure he took in reading his *Paraphrase* upon *David's Psalms*.

The Learned Dr. *Duport*, in the Preface to his *Metaphrasis Psalmorum*, tells us, That Buchanan transcended all that ever writ upon this Subject.

Monsieur Teissier, in his *Elogies* of the Learned Men which *Thuanus* mentions, says, That the *Paraphrase* of the *Psalms* was Buchanan's chief Master-piece; and that which added much to the credit of this Work, was, that he compos'd it at the very time his Mind was overwhelm'd

whelm'd with Grief, to wit, while he was a Prisoner in a Monastery in *Portugal*.

Grotius, in his *Epist. V. ad Gallos*, speaking of the Tragedies of Buchanan, says, That he has not sufficiently kept up the gravity of the *Buskin*; but, in other respects, that he is a very great Man.

Rapin remarks, That among the *Modern Poets* that have writ in *Latin* of late days, those who could attain to the *Numbers* and *Cadence* of *Virgil*, in the turn of their Verse, have had most Reputation; And because that Buchanan, who otherwise had *Wit*, *Fancy*, and a *pure Style*, perceiv'd not this *Grace*, or neglected it, he has lost much of his Value and Credit: Perhaps nothing was wanting to make him an Accomplish'd *Poet*, but this perfection, which most certainly is not *Chimerical*: And whoever shall reflect a little on the power of the *Dorian*, *Lydian*, and *Phrygian* Airs, whereof Aristotle speaks in his *Problems*, and *Athenæus* in his *Banquets*, he must acknowledge, what Vertue there is in *Number* and *Harmony*. *Rap. Reflex. on Arist. Treatise of Poesie*, I. part, Sect. 37.

The same Author tells us, That Buchanan has a Character compos'd of many Characters; his Wit is easie, delicate, natural, but not great or lofty. *Rap. ibid. part 2d. Sect. xvi.*

The *Jephthe*, and *Baptista* of Buchanan, contain little considerable, except the purity of Style, in which these Tragedies are written. *Ibid. Sect. 23.*

Buchanan, says Rapin, has *Odes* comparable to those of Antiquity; but he hath great *Unevennesses* by the mixture of his *Character*, which is not *Uniform* enough. *Ibid. Sect. xxx.*

Buchanan is noted by the Church of *Rome*, as *Hæreticus primæ Classis*, a *Heretick* of the first Form.

Callimachus,

A N Excellent Greek Poet of *Cyrene*, in great favour and esteem with *Ptolomeus Philadelphus*, and of his Son *Euergetes*, in honour of whose Queen he wrote his Fiction, call'd *Coma Berenices*. He also wrote *Hymns*, *Elegies*, and *Epigrams*, whereof many of his *Hymns* and *Epigrams*, as also several Fragments of his other Works, are yet extant, and not many Years since published by the Learned *Mademoiselle le Fevre*, with Notes and Remarks full of solid Learning.

This Poet was one of the most Learned Men in his Age, according to the Opinion of *Tanaquillus le Fevre*, and some other *Criticks*: And, it may be, we cannot easily find an Author, who has writ a greater Number of Poems; though they were generally but small Pieces; for the aversion he had to long and tedious Works, made him often say, That a great Book was a great Evil. But herein he did by no means please the *Criticks* of that Age, who commonly thought (but with little reason,) That Poets, like the Sea, should never be dry, and that to Abound was the best Quality of a Writer.

Mademoiselle le Fevre, in the Preface to her Edition of *Callimachus*, says, That in all the Writings of the Ancient Greeks, there never was any thing more Elegant, nor more polite, than the Works of *Callimachus*.

And of the same Opinion was her Father, *Tanaquillus*, in his *Abregé des Vies des Poetes Grecs*, pag. 143, 144. who tells us, That the way that *Callimachus* took in Composing his Verses, was both pure and Masculine; that

that *Catullus* and *Propertius* did often imitate him, nay, and that sometimes they stole from him.

In these last Ages, there have been some *Criticks*, who would by no means allow, that *Callimachus* ever had any great *Genius* for *Poetry*; and amongst others, we find *Ger. Job. Vossius* of this mind, in his *De Arte Poetica*, pag. 27. and also pag. 67. It is very probable, they might ground this their Opinion upon that *Distich* of *Ovid*:

* *Battiades toto semper cantabitur Orbe,* * *Callimachus.*
Quamvis ingenio non valet, Arte valet.

So that upon the faith of *Ovid*, they have given it for granted, That this Poet does rather abound with *Art* and *Labour*, than with *Wit* or *Spirit*. But *Daniel Heinsius*, in his Preface before *Hesiod*, Printed 1603. explaining this place of *Ovid*, tells us, That when this Author seems to accuse *Callimachus*, for not having had a *Genius*; his meaning is not, that he wanted Invention, Subtlety, Address, or *Wit*; but only, that He is not Natural enough, that he is too elaborate, and has too much of affectation, as if he thought it more honour to be a good *Gramarian*, than to be a true Poet. And hence (without doubt) it was, That *Candidus Hesychius*, a late Author with that fictitious Name, in his Book Entituled *Godellus utrum Poeta*, cap. 2. pag. 75. saith, That *Callimachus*, finding that the *Wind* did not favour him, never durst venture into the *open Sea*, but always kept near the *Shore*; that so he might the more easily get into *Harbour*; that is to say, He wanting a *Poetical Genius*, and that *Enthusiasm* which elevates Poets, he never car'd to undertake a Work of too great a length.

38 Characters and Censures.

Not only *Quintilian*, in his *Institut. Oratoriar.* lib. x. cap. i. but also *Philippus Beroaldus*, in his Comment upon *Propertius*, as likewise *Ger. Job. Vossius*, in his *Institut. Poetic.* lib. 3. pag. 51. do severally conclude, and agree, That *Callimachus* pass'd among the Greeks for their best, and chiefest Writer of *Elegies*.

Though *Callimachus* was generally esteem'd a very good Grammian, yet *Joseph Scaliger*, in *Scaligerana* 2. pag. 187. says, That he affected the most obscure, Antique, and improper Words, in many of his *Poems*.

Joannes Jonsius, in his *De Scriptoribus Historiae Philosophicæ*, lib. 11. cap. v. affirms, That *Callimachus* was a most Excellent Critick; and that we cannot sufficiently deplore the loss of those many Pieces he Wrote, in relation to that sort of Learning.

Caius Valerius Catullus,

A Writer of *Epigrams*. He was Born at *Verona* about the end of the Second Year of the 173. Olympiad, Eighty Six Years before *Christ*. He died in the Thirtieth Year of his Age, and in the Fourth Year of the 180. Olympiad, the very Year that *Cicero* return'd from his *Exile*.

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poëtis Latinis*, tells us, That *Catullus* had so great a reputation for Learning, that even by the general consent of the Learned, the *Epithet* of *Ductus* was affixed to his Name. *Ovid* thought, that, for Majesty and loftiness of Verse, *Catullus* was no way inferior to *Virgil* himself. And 'tis certain, says *Crinitus*, that

that notwithstanding both the *Plinys* have condemn'd *Catullus's Verse*, as harsh and unpleasant, yet he has generally been accounted a most Elegant Poet, and has had several who have copy'd after him.

Petrus Victorius, lib. 22. cap. xv. *Variarum Lectionum*, says, That 'tis impossible any thing can be more Witty, more Learned, or more Pleasant, than *Catullus*; not to meddle with the purity of his Stile, wherein he Transcends almost all others.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* i. remarks, that *Catullus* was too *Critical*, and too strict an observer of the *Roman Elegancies*.

Turnebus, lib. 12. *Adversar. cap. 1.* styles *Catullus* The Sweetest, and most Polite, of all the Poets.

Paulus Manutius, in his Third Book, and Fourteenth Epist. to *Muretus*, gives *Catullus* the preference before *Tibullus*, or *Propertius*, in the Elegancy of Stile, and in curious, neat Sentences.

Ovid calls *Catullus*, a Learned, Eloquent, and Witty, but withall an Obscene Poet.

Martial had so high an Opinion of *Catullus*, that we find he compares him even to *Virgil*:

*Tantum magna suo debet Verona Catullo,
Quantum parva suo Mantua Virgilio.*

Mart. lib. 14. Epigr. 195.

Borrichius, in his *Dissert. Acad. De Poëtis*, pag. 49: says, That *Catullus* was much in *Cicero's favour*, and that he was a very sweet Poet; and if at any time he appears hard or rough, especially in his *Epicks*, yet he has made sufficiently amends by his wonderful pleasant Wit, and by his pure Elegancy in the *Roman Language*.

He also adds, that 'tis pity his *Wit* was not better employ'd.

Caspar Barthius, lib. 38. cap. 7. Adversar. tells us, That *Catullus's Contemporaries*, gave him the Title of *Learned*, for no other reason, but only because, he was the first that knew how to Translate into *Latin Verse*, whatsoever was most Beautiful and Delicate in the *Greek Poets*; which, before him, was thought impossible to be done.

Julius Scaliger, in his *De Poëtica*, p. 855 says, That he ne're could find in any Author, nor for his heart can he imagine the reason, why the *Ancients* gave *Catullus* the Title of *Learned*; since He does not see there is any thing in his Books, but what is common and ordinary. He says, his *Stile* his generally very hard and unpolish'd; though indeed, sometimes it flows like Water, and has no strength; that he is often so very immodest, that it puts him out of Countenance; and, that sometimes he is so very languid and faint, that he cannot but pity him; and, to Conclude, that he is often under such difficulty, and constraint, that he is mightily troubled and concern'd for him.

Rapin remarks, That *Catullus* in his *Elegies* has too much *Softness*, and a *Negligence* too affected.

The *Beauty* of an *Epigram*, says *Rapin*, consists either in the *delicate turn*, or in a *lucky word*. The *Greeks* have understood this sort of *Poesie* otherwise than the *Latins*. The *Greek Epigram* runs upon the *turn* of a Thought that is *Natural*, but fine and subtle. The *Latin Epigram*, by a false *taste* that sway'd in the beginning of the decay of the *Latin Tongue*, endeavours to surprize the Mind by some *nipping Word*, which is call'd a *Point*. *Catullus* Writ after the former manner, which is of a *finer Character*; for he endeavours to close a natural Thought within a delicate

delicate turn of Words, and within the simplicity of a very soft Expression.

Martial was in some manner the Author of this other way, that is to say, to terminate an ordinary Thought by some Word that is surprizing. After all, Men of a good Taste, says Rapin, preferr'd the way of Catullus, before that of Martial; there being more of true delicacy in that, than in this. And in these latter Ages, we have seen a Noble Venetian, named Andreas Naugerius, who had an exquisite discernment, and who, by a natural Antipathy against all that which is called Point, which he judged to be of an ill relish, sacrific'd every Year, in Ceremony, a Volume of Martial's Epigrams, to the Manes of Catullus, in Honour to his Charracter, which he judg'd was to be preferr'd to that of Martial. Rapin's Reflections on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie, part 2. Sect. 29, and 31.

Gerardus Johannes Vossius observes, That the roughness, or uneveness in Catullus's Verse, so much taken notice of by the best Criticks, proceeds chiefly from his too frequent use of the Figures, Echlipis, and Synalæpha. Lib. 3. Institutionum Poeticarum, pag. 56.

Geoffry Chaucer.

Three several Places contend for the Birth of this Famous Poet. First, Berkshire, from the words of Leland, that he was born in Barocensi Provincia; and Mr. Cambden affirms, that Dunington-Castle, nigh unto

Newbury, was Anciently his Inheritance. Secondly, Oxfordshire, where, John Pits is positive, that his Father (who was a Knight) liv'd, and that he was born at Woodstock. Thirdly, The Author of his Life, Printed 1602. Supposes him to be born at London. But though the place of his Birth is not certainly known, yet this is agreed upon by all hands, that he was counted the chieft of the English Poets, not only of his time, but continued to be so esteem'd till this Age; and as much as we despise his old fashion'd Phrase, and Obsolete Words, He was one of the first Refiners of the English Language.

Of how great esteem he was in the Age wherein he flourisht, viz. the Reigns of Henry the IV. Henry the V. and part of Henry the VI. appears, besides his being Knighted, and made Poet Lauriate by the Honour he had to be ally'd by Marriage to the great Earl of Lancaster, John of Gaunt.

We have several of his Works yet extant, but his *Squires Tale*, and some other of his Pieces are not to be found.

John Pits, in his *De Illustribus Angliae Scriptoribus*, says, That Chaucer so illustrated the English Poetry, that he may justly be esteem'd our English Homer.

He likewise tells us, that he was an Excellent Rhetorician, a skillful Mathematician, an acute Philosopher, and no contemptible Divine.

Winstanley, in the Lives of the English Poets, compares Chaucer for the sweetness of his Poetry, to *Stesichorus*; And (saith he) as *Cethegus* was call'd *Suadæ Medulla*, so may Chaucer be rightly call'd the Pith and Sinews of Eloquence, and the very life it self of all Mirth and pleasant Writing. Besides, one gift he had above other Authors, says Winstanley, and that is, by the Excellencies of

of his Descriptions, to possess his Readers with a stronger Imagination of seeing that done before their Eyes which they Read, than any other that ever Writ in any Tongue.

But above all, *He tells us, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales,* is most valu'd and esteem'd of.

The Learned and Ingenious Mr. Roger Ascham calls *Chaucer, The English Homer;* adding also, That he values his Authority equal to that of *Sophocles or Euripiæs in Greek.*

Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Defence of Poesie*, gives him this Character; *Chaucer undoubtedly did excellently in his Troilus and Crescid, of whom truly I know not whether to marvel more, either that He in that misty time could see so clearly, or We in this clear Age walk so stumblingly after him.*

This agrees with the following Verses, made by Sir John Denham:

*Old Chaucer, like the Morning Star,
To us discovers Day from far;
His light those Mists and Clouds dissolv'd,
Which our dark Nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the Shades,
Darkness again the Age invades.*

J. Denham. The 3d. Edit. 1684. pag. 89.

Sir Henry Savil, in his Preface to Bradwardin's Book against Pelagius, says, that *Chaucer was the chief of our English Poets, and that he had a sharp Judgment, and a pleasant Wit; and that he was also well skill'd both in Philosophy and Divinity.*

Sir Richard Baker, in the Reign of Edward the Third, styles *Sir Geoffry Chaucer, the Homer of our Nation;* adding,

That he found as sweet a Muse in the Groves of *Woodstock*, as the *Ancients* did upon the Banks of *Helicon*.

Cambden also, in his *Britannia*, tells us, That it is the only thing the Town of *Woodstock* hath to brag of, That she gave Birth to *Geoffrey Chaucer*, our *English Homer*; of whom, in his Opinion, may truly be said, that which an *Italian Poet* once apply'd to *Homer*:

— *Hic ille est, cuius de gurgite Sacro
Combibit arcanos vatum omnis turb: furores.*

Dr. *Sprat*, in his *History of the Royal Society*, pag. 42. says, That till the time of King *Henry the Eighth*, there was scarce any man regarded the *English Language*, but *Chaucer*; and that nothing was Written in it, which one would be willing to read twice, but some of his Poetry; But that then it began to raise it self a little, and to sound tolerably well.

Tho' *Verstegan* commends *Chaucer*, as an excellent Poet for his time; yet he wholly differs from those, who are of opinion, that he did so mightily refine the *English Language*. Indeed, he rather condemns *Chaucer* for adulterating the *English Tongue*, by the mixture of so many *French* and *Latin Words*.

This our Poet, lies buried in *Westminster Abby*, with the following Inscription:

*Qui fuit Anglorum vates ter maximus olim,
Galfridus Chaucer, conditur hoc Tumulo.
Annum si queras Domini, si tempora Mortis,
Ecce notæ sub sunt, quæ tibi cuncta notant;
25 Octobris 1400.*

Ærumnarum requies Mors.

Nicolaus Brigham hos fecit Musarum nomine sumptus.
Claudius

Claudius Claudianus,

BORN at *Alexandria* in *Egypt*; he flourish'd in the time of *Theodosius*, the Great, and his Children, Christian Emperours, tho' he himself continued an Obstinate Heathen; however, for his eminency in *Latin Poetry* (whereof his *Proserpina's Rape*, and several other Poems yet extant, are a Testimony,) he had his Statue erected by *Arcadius* and *Honorius*. And in that Inscription, which was set upon his Statue, he is called *Prægloriosissimus Poetaram*.

Petrus Crinitus, lib. v. *De Poetis Latinis*, cap. 85. says, That *Claudian* was of an Excellent Genius, very much adapted to Poetry; that he is very happy in his Flights, and takes such a wonderful delight in the variety of Figures and Sentences, that he seems by Nature to have been design'd for a Poet.

Joannes Ludovicus Vives, in his Comment upon St. Austin's Fifth Book *De Civitate Dei*, cap. 25. tells us, That *Claudian* was born to Poetry; that he was both Elegant, and Witty, and of a true Poetical Genius, but inclining to Superstition; and that, as for his Poem *De Christo*, he verily believes, he wrote it only to please *Honorius*, so great a Sycophant was *Claudian*.

Julius Cæsar Scaliger, lib. 6. cap. 5. *De re Poeticâ*, says, That *Claudian* was a very great Poet; and that though he did not treat of the noblest sort of Subjects, yet what was wanting that way, he would be sure to supply with his Wit. He adds, That he was a Poet of a right happy Vein, that he had a solid judgment, that his Style was pure, easie, and natural, and that he had

had a great deal of smartness, without the least affectation.

Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus tells us, That he did not much dislike *Claudian's Verses*, tho' there were some who did, upon the account of their having no variety; but always falling into the same *Cadence*. But, says *Gyraldus*, if there be any that approve of his Verses, let them do so, with all my heart; yet he is sure, *Claudian* flags in the *Invention*; for tho' at his first setting out, he seems to be full of Fire, and very brisk, yet all of a sudden he stops, like a Man out of breath, and his Conclusion is never answerable to his Beginning. However, as *Piso* said, *Claudian* is a quick, ready Poet, and there is in him a great deal of Musick and Sweetness: But yet the truth of it is, he is not fit to be Copy'd after; Though, as *Gyraldus* observes, there are *Flowers* in him, which if a Wise Man have the gathering, would be of wonderful advantage.

George Buchanan, in his Dialogue, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*, styles *Claudian*, a Poet of an Excellent Wit, and of very great Learning.

Eustatius Swartius, lib. 1. *Analectorum*, cap. xiii. says, That *Claudian* was a Poet worthy of the highest Commendation; and that tho' his Wit and Eloquence happened to be in a Vicious Age; yet, since *Augustus's Reign*, no Man went beyond him, either in purity of Style, or loftiness of Expression.

But *Honoratus Faber*, lib. 3. *Euphyandri*, cap. 2. tells us, Though his *Style* be natural, soft, and sweet, yet that his *Latin* is not so very pure, as some would perswade us.

Borrichius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. De Poetis*, pag. 73: observes to us, That even at this day *Claudian's Verses* are read with great Veneration, in respect of his profound

found Wit; that his *Style* is chaste, grave, and sublime; and yet, which is a thing to be admir'd, easie and natural, interwoven with *Moral* and *Political Instructions*; but, to speak the truth, his *Style* is now and then a little too haughty, and he is too full of the *Sallies* of *Youth*, which yet in *Virgil* no Man ever had just reason to find fault with.

Rapin remarks, That *Claudian* hath Wit and Fancy; but no taste for that delicacy of the *Numbers*, and that turn of the Verse, which the Skilful admire in *Virgil*; that he falls perpetually into the same *Cadence*; and, for that cause, one can hardly read him without being wearied; And that he has no *Elevation* in any kind. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Arist.* *Treatise of Poesie*, part 2d. sect. xv.

The same Author tells us, That the Common Undertakers, in *Panegyricks*, who have not force to form handsomely a Design, loose the Reins to their Fancy; and after they have pil'd a heap of gross and deform'd *Praises*, without Order or Connexion, one upon another, This, forsooth, must be call'd a *Panegyrick*. 'Tis thus, says *Rapin*, that *Claudian* has *Prais'd* the Emperour *Honorius*, and the Consuls, *Frobinus*, *Olyorius*, *Stilicon*, and the other Illustrious Persons of his time. Throughout all his *Panegyricks* reigns an *Air of Youthfulness*, says *Rapin*, that has nothing of what is *Solid*, though there appears some *Wit*. *Rap.* *ibid.* sect. xiv.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana poster.* pag. 51. calls *Claudian* a most Elegant Poet; adding, That he has a great many fine things in his *Panegyrick* upon the fourth *Consulship* of *Honorius*.

Joannes Cuspinianus, in *Commentario*, ad annum *Urbis* MCLII. says, That *Claudian* writ a most Elegant *Panegyrick* upon this fourth *Consulship* of *Honorius*; which; *says*

says he, if a Man reads carefully, it may save him the reading the several Histories of those times; for that one may there find all the remarkable Occurrences, that had then happen'd: To conclude, he says, That *Claudian* was a Man of *Universal Learning*.

Abraham Cowley,

WAS born in *Fleetstreet*, near to the end of *Chancery-Lane*, in the Parish of St. *Dunstan* in the *West, London*. *Anno 1618*. His Father, who was a *Grocer*, dying before the Son was born, the Mother, by her Endeavours and Friends, got him into *Westminster School*, as a King's Scholar; where, in the Year 1633, then going into the Sixteenth Year of his Age, he Compos'd a Book, called *Poetical Blossoms*; whereby the great pregnancy of his Parts was discover'd: Soon after having obtain'd the *Greek* and *Roman Languages*, he was remov'd to *Trinity-Colledge* in *Cambridge*, where most of his Works were writ, or at least design'd.

Dr. *Sprat* says, That of the several Works published by Mr. *Cowley*, it is hard to give one general Character, because of the difference of their Subjects; and the various forms and distant times of their Writing. Yet, says he, this is true of them all, That, in all the several shapes of his *Style*, there is still very much of the likeness and impression of the same Mind: The same unaffected Modesty, and natural freedom, and easie vigour, and cheerful passions, and innocent mirth, which appear'd in all his Manners. We have many things that

that he writ in two very *unlike* Conditions, in the *University* and the *Court*. But in his *Poetry*, as well as his life, he mingled with Excellent Skill what was good in both States. In his *Life* he joyn'd the innocence and sincerity of the *Scholar*, with the humanity and good behaviour of the *Courtier*. In his *Poems* he united the Solidity and Art of the *One*, with the Gentility and Gracefulness of the *Other*.

If any shall think, that he was not wonderfully curious in the choice and elegance of all his Words: I will affirm, says *Sprat*, with more truth on the other side, That he had no mariner of affectation in them: He took them as he found them made to his hands; he neither went before, nor came after the use of the Age. *He* forsook the Conversation, but never the Language, of the *City* and *Court*. *He* understood exceeding well, all the variety and power of *Poetical Numbers*; and practis'd all sorts with great happiness. If his Verses in some places seem not as soft and flowing as some would have them, it was his *choice* not his *fault*. He knew that in diverting Mens Minds, there should be the same variety observ'd, as in the prospects of their Eyes: Where a Rock, a Precipice, or a rising Wave, is often more delightful than a smooth, even Ground, or a Calm Sea. Where the Matter required it, he was as gentle as any Man. But where higher Vertues were chiefly to be regarded, an exact *Numerosity* was not then his main Care. This (says *Sprat*) may serve to answer those who upbraid some of his Pieces with *roughness*, and with more *Contraction* than they are willing to allow. But these Admirers of *Gentleness* without *Sinews*, should know that different Arguments must have different Colours of Speech: That there is a kind of variety of Sexes in *Poetry*, as well as in *Mankind*: That as

the peculiar Excellence of the *Feminine Kind*, is smoothness and beauty; So Strength is the chief Praise of the *Masculine*.

He had a perfect Mastery in both the Languages in which he writ: But each of them kept a just distance from the other; neither did his *Latin* make his *English* too old, nor his *English* make his *Latin* too Modern. He excell'd both in *Prose* and *Verse*; and both together have that perfection, which is commended by some of the *Ancients*, above all others, that they are very obvious to the Conception, but most difficult in the imitation.

His *Fancy* flow'd with great speed, and therefore it was very fortunate to him, that his *Judgment* was equal to manage it. He never runs his Reader, nor his Argument, out of breath. He perfectly practises the hardest Secret of good Writing, to know when he has done enough. He always leaves off in such a manner, that it appears it was in his power to have said much more. In the particular Expressions there is still much to be applauded, but more in the Disposition, and order of the whole. From thence there springs a new Comeliness, besides the feature of each part. His Invention is powerful, and large as can be desir'd. But it seems all to arise out of the Nature of the Subject, and to be just fitted for the thing of which he speaks. If ever he goes far for it, he dissembles his pains admirably well.

The *Variety of Arguments* that he has manag'd, is so large, that there is scarce any particular of all the *Passions* of Men, or *Works of Nature*, and *Providenc*e, which he has pass'd by undescrib'd. Yet (says *Sprat*) he still observes the Rules of Decency, with so much care, that whether he inflames his Reader with the softer Affection,

ons, or delights him with inoffensive Raillery, or teaches the familiar Manners of Life, or adorns the Discoveries of Philosophy, or inspires him with the Heroick Characters of Charity and Religion; To all these Matters, that are so wide asunder, says *Sprat*, he still proportions a due Figure of Speech, and a proper Measure of Wit. This indeed is most remarkable, that a Man who was so constant and fix'd in the *Moral Ideas* of his Mind, should yet be so changeable in his *Intellectual*, and in both to the highest degree of Excellence.

In his *Latin Poems*, says Dr. *Sprat*, he has express'd to admiration, all the *Numbers* of Verses, and *Figures* of *Poesie*, that are scatter'd up and down among the *Ancients*. There is hardly to be found in them all, any good fashion of Speech, or colour of Measure, but he has comprehended it, and given instances of it, according as his several Arguments requir'd either a *Majestick Spirit*, or a *Passionate*, or a *Pleasant*. This is the more extraordinary, in that it was never yet perform'd by any *Single Poet* of the *Ancient Romans* themselves. They had the Language natural to them, and so might easily have moulded it into what Form or Humour they pleas'd: Yet it was their constant Custome, to confine all their Thoughts and practice to one or two ways of Writing, as despairing ever to compass all together. This is evident in those that excell'd in *Odes* and *Songs*, in the *Comical*, *Tragical*, *Epical*, *Elegiacal*, or *Satyrical* way. And this perhaps occasion'd the first distinction and Number of the *Muses*. For they thought the Task too hard for any one of them, though they fancied them to be *Goddesses*. And therefore they divided it amongst them all, and only recommended to each of them, the care of a distant Character of *Poetry* and *Musick*.

Sprat's Account of the Life of Mr. Abraham Cowley.

The Character that Sir John Denham gave of *Abraham Cowley*, you may take in these his following Verses:

*Old Mother Wit, and Nature gave
Shakespear and Fletcher all they have ;
In Spencer, and in Johnson, Art
Of flower Nature got the Start ;
But both in him so equal are,
None knows which bears the happiest share ;
To him no Author was unknown,
Tet what he wrote was all his own ;
He melted not the ancient Gold,
Nor with Ben. Johnson did make bold
To plunder all the Roman Stores
Of Poets, and of Orators :
Horace his Wit, and Virgil's State
He did not steal, but emulate ;
And when he would like them appear,
Their Garb, but not their Cloaths, did wear.*

Denham's Poems, pag. 90, 91. of the 3d Edition.

Rimer tells us, That a more happy Genius for Heroick Poefie appears in *Cowley*, than either in *Spencer*, or *D'avenant*. He understood the purity, the perspicuity, the majesty of Stile, and the Vertue of Numbers. He could discern what was beautiful and pleasant in *Nature*, and could express his Thoughts without the least difficulty or constraint. He understood how to dispose of the Matters, and to manage his Digressions. In short, he understood *Homer* and *Virgil*, and as prudently made his advantage of them. Yet as it may be lamented, that he carried not on the Work so far as he design'd,

so it might be wish'd that he had liv'd to Revise what he did leave us: I think, says Rimer, the *Troubles of David* is neither Title nor Matter proper for an *Heroick Poem*; seeing it is rather the *Actions*, than his *Sufferings*, that make an *Heroe*: Nor can it be defended by *Homer's Odysses*, since *Ulysses's Sufferings* conclude with one great and perfect Action.

But notwithstanding this *Censure* of Mr. Rimer, he afterwards tells us, That in *Cowley's Davideis* (Fragment and imperfect as it is) there shines something of a more fine, more free, more new, and more noble *Air*, than appears in the *Hierusalem* of *Tasso*, which, for all his Care, is scarce perfectly purg'd from *Pedantry*.

And after all, says Rimer, in the *Lyrick way* *Cowley* far exceeds *Tasso*, and all the rest of the *Italians*. See *Rimer's Pref.* to his *Translat. of Rapin*.

Samuel Woodford, in the *Preface* to his *Paraphrase* upon the *Psalms*, remarks, That in *Cowley's Davideis* there is to be found, as much as could be expected for the first sitting, whatever is requisite to make an *Heroick Poem* beautiful: Sound Judgment, happy Invention, graceful Disposition, unaffected Facility, strict Observance of Decencies, and all set off with that Majesty and Sweetness of Verse, that it is to be lamented he had not an Opportunity before his Death, to finish it according to his own Model, and the Provision he had laid up to that purpose. And truly (says *Woodford*) all his Divine Poems, have I know not what greatness of Spirit, which you shall seldom meet with elsewhere, and in which generally he has as much out-done himself, as in the rest equal'd the most happy of our *Modern Poets*.

The occasion of Mr. *Cowley's* falling on the *Pindarique* way of Writing, was (as Dr. *Sprat* informs us,) his accidental

accidental meeting with *Pindar's Works*, in a place where he had no other Books to direct him: Having then consider'd at leisure the height of his Invention, and the Majesty of his Style, he try'd immediately to imitate it in *English*. And he perform'd it, says *Sprat*, without the danger that *Horace* presag'd to the Man who should dare to attempt it.

How well *Cowley* succeeded in imitating the great *Pindar*, according to the opinion of Mr. *Flatman*, appears by his *Pindarique Ode* on *Samuel Woodford's Version* of the *Psalms*:

Bold man, that dares attempt Pindariqu' now,
 Since the great Pindar's greatest Son
 From the ungrateful Age is gon;
Cowley has bid th' ungrateful Age Adieu!
 Apollo's rare Columbus, He
 Found out new Worlds of Poetry;
 He, like an Eagle, soar'd aloft,
 To seize his noble prey;
 Yet as a Dove's, his Soul was soft,
 Quiet as Night, but bright as Day :
To Heaven in a fiery Chariot He
Ascended by Seraphick Poetry;
Yet which of us dull Mortals since can find
Any Inspiring Mantle, that He left behind?
Thomas Flatman.

Dryden tells us, That Mr. *Cowley*, indeed, has brought *Pindarique Verse* as near Perfection as was possible, in so short a time. But (says he) if I may be allow'd to speak my mind modestly, and without injury to his Sacred Ashes, somewhat of the purity of *English*, somewhat of more equal Thoughts, somewhat of sweetness in the Numbers,

Numbers, in one word, somewhat of a finer turn and more Lyrical Verse is yet wanting. As for the Soul of it, which consists in the Warmth and Vigour of Fancy, the Masterly Figures, and the Copiousness of Imagination, he has excell'd all others in this kind. Yet, if the Kind it self be capable of more Perfection, tho' rather in the Ornamental parts of it, than the Essential, what Rules of Morality or Respect (says Dryden) have I broken, in naming the Defects, that they may hereafter be amended? *Imitation* is a nice Point, and there are few Poets who deserve to be Models in all they Write. **Dryd.** Pref. to the 2d. Part of Poetical Miscellanies.

The Earl of Mulgrave, speaking of the Nature of Pindarique Odes, tells us:

*The Poet here must be indeed Inspir'd
With Fury too, as well as Fancy fir'd.
Cowley might boast to have perform'd this part,
Had he with Nature joyn'd the Rules of Art;
But ill Expression gives sometimes Allay
To that rich Fancy, which can ne're decay.*

Mulg. Essay on Poetry.

This Great Man, Abraham Cowley, lies buried in Westminster Abby, near two of our most Eminent English Poets, Chaucer and Spencer, with this Inscription:

ABRAHAMUS COWLEIUS,
Anglorum Pindarus, Flaccus, Maro,
Deliciæ, Decus, Desiderium Ævi sui,
Hic juxta situs est.
Aurea dum volitant late tua Scripta per Orbem
Et Famâ æternum vivis Divine Poeta,

Hic

*Hic placida jaceas requie, custodiat Urnam
 Cana fides vigilentq; perenni Lampade Musæ;
 Sit sacer iste Locus, nec quis temerarius aust
 Sacrilegâ turbare manu Venerable Bustum.
 Intacti maneant, maneant per secula Dulcis
 Couleii Cineres, serventq; immobile Saxum.*

Sic votet,

*Votumque suum apud Posteros sacratum esse voluit,
 Qui viro Incomparabili posuit Sepulchrale marmor:*

GEORGIUS DUX BUCKINGHAMÆ.

*Excessit è Vitâ Anno Ætatis 49. Et honorificâ pompâ
 elatus ex Ædibus Buckinghamianis, viris Illustri-
 bus omnium Ordinum exsequias celebrantibus,
 Sepultus est Die 3º Mensis Augusti, Anno Dom. 1667.*

Dantes Aligerus.

A Most Renowned Florentine, and the first of Italian Poets of any Fame or Note. He was born in the Year 1265. He dyed at Ravanna in the Year 1321. That which most proclaims his Fame to the World, is his Triple Poem, Entituled, *Paradise*, *Purgatory*, and *Hell*; besides which he has Wrote several Things in Prose. In his *Opusculum de Monarchia* he held, That the *Civil Government* had no dependance upon the *Church*; for which reason, after his Death, he was Condemn'd as an *Heretic*, and the said Book was Prohibited by the Church of Rome.

Gisbertus

Gisbertus Voetius, in the Second Book, the First Section, and the Ninth Chapter of his *Bibliotheca*, says, That those Italian Poems of *Petrarcha* and *Aligerus*, which do now and then touch upon Ecclesiastical Matters, are preferr'd by Divines before any of the Works of the other Poets.

Olearius, in his *Abacus Patrologicus*, calls *Aligerus*, a Man of very great Credit and Authority, who by his Learning had got the Love and Esteem of all men; and that he was so great an Afferter of Truth, that he often laid open the frauds of the Church of Rome.

Johannes Villani, both his Countrey-Man and Contem-
porary, in the Ninth Book of his *Florentine History*, af-
firms, That *Aligerus* exceeded all that went before him,
either in *Verse* or in *Prose*, both for Nobleness of Fancy,
and a Majestick Style.

Boccace, in his *De Casibus virorum Illustrium*, calls *Dantes Aligerus*, an excellent Poet.

Cælius Rhodiginus, lib. 15. cap. 20. *Lectionum Antiquarum*,
stiles him a Poet not contemptible.

Platina, in the Life of *Boniface VIII.* says, That *Dantes Aldegerius* was a Man of very great Learning, and an ex-
cellent Italian Poet.

Lilius Gyraldus, remarks, That in *Aligerus*, one might
find both Learning and great Knowledge, and that he was
particularly skill'd in the *Parisian Divinity*; but that he is
sometimes too sharp and biting. He farther tells us,
That many think him too negligent in point of Order
and Method, and also as to his Style; but that one
Joannes Stephanus, a *Hermite*, a Person of great Learn-
ing, and one who from his Childhood had a mighty
affection for *Aligerus*, was wont to refute those per-
sons, by giving a full Answer to their Objections.

Rapin tells us, That *Dantes Aligerus* wants fire, and that he has not heat enough. *Rap. Reflex. on Arist. Treatise of Poesie, part 1. sect. 2.*

He also observes to us, That his Thoughts are so *Profound*, that much Art is requir'd to dive into them. *Ibid. sect. xxvii.*

And, to conclude, he says, That his Triple Poem of *Paradise, Purgatory, and Hell*, (which the *Italians* of those days, call'd a *Comedy*, but passes for an *Epick Poem* in the Opinion of *Castelvetro*) is of a sad and woful contrivance; and that speaking generally, *Dante* has a strain too *Profound*, to deserve the name of an *Heroick Poet.* *Rap. Ibid. part 2. sect. xvi.*

Sir William Davenant,

WAS born in the City of *Oxford*, in the Parish of *St. Martins*, commonly call'd *Carfax*, near the end of *February* in the Year 1605. He was Poet *Laureat* to King *Charles* the first, and King *Charles* the Second. He dyed on the Seventh day of *April*, 1668. Aged 63. and was buried amongst the Poets in *Westminster Abby*, near to his old Antagonist, and Rival for the Bays, Mr. *Thomas May*: 'Twas observ'd, that at his Funeral his Coffin wanted the Ornament of his *Laureats-Crown*, which by the Law of *Heraldry* justly appertain'd to him: But this omission (says *Gerard Langbaine*) is sufficiently recompenc'd by an Eternal Fame, which will always accompany his Memory; He having been the first Introducer of all that is Splendid in our *English Opera's*, and

and 'tis by his means and industry, that our Stage at present Rivals the *Italian Theatre*.

His Works were all Printed together in a Large Folio, London 1673. and Dedicated by his Widow to his Royal Highness, the late King James.

Dryden, in his Preface to the *Tempest*, says, That in the Time he Writ with Sir William D'avenant, he had the opportunity to observe somewhat more nearly of him, than he had formerly done, when he had only a bare acquaintance with him; That he found him then of so quick a Fancy, that nothing was propos'd to him, on which he could not suddenly produce a Thought extreamly pleasant and surprizing; and that those first Thoughts of his, contrary to the old Latin Proverb, were not always the least happy; and that as his Fancy was quick, so likewise were the Products of it remote and new; that he borrow'd not of any other; and that his Imitations were such, as could not easily enter into any other Man; that his Corrections were sober and judicious; and that he Corrected his own Writings much more severely, than those of another Man, bestowing twice the Labour and time in Polishing, which he us'd in Invention.

Antonius à Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, page 292. calls D'avenant, *The sweet Swan of Isis*. He says, That though he wanted much of University Learning (his Genius being always opposite to Logick,) yet he made as high and noble Flights in the Poetical Faculty, as Fancy could advance, without it.

Winstanley, in his Lives of the English Poets, tells us, That Sir William D'avenant may be accounted one of the Chiefest of Apollo's Sons, for the great fluency of his Wit and Fancy; especially his *Gondibert*, the Crown of all his other Writings.

Mr. Hobbs, in his Preface to *D'avenant's Gondibert*, is of the Opinion, That it is the best of Heroick Poems, either *Ancient or Modern*.

How high an Opinion also Mr. Cowley had of this Work, appears by these following Lines of his:

*Methinks Heroick Poesie till now
Like some Fantastick Fairy-Land did show,
Gods, Devils, Nymphs, Witches, and Gyants Race,
And all but Man, in Man's chief Work and Place.
Thou like some worthy Knight with Sacred Arms
Dost drive the Monsters thence, and end the Charms.
Instead of those dost Men and Manners plant,
The things which that Rich Soil did chiefly Want.
Yet ev'en thy Mortals do their Gods excel,
Taught by thy Muse to Fight and Love so well.
By fatal Hand's whilst present Empires fall,
Thine from the Grave past Monarchies recall.
So much more thanks from Humane Kind does merit
The Poet's Fury, than the Zealot's Spirit.
And from the Grave thou mak'st this Empire rise,
Not like some dreadful Ghost t'affright our Eyes,
But with more Lustre and Triumphant State,
Than when it Crown'd at proud Verona sate.*

Abr. Cowley, upon D'avenant's Gondibert.

Dryden says, That, as for *Heroick Plays*, the first light we had of them on the *English Theatre*, was from the late Sir Willi.m D'avenant: It being forbidden him in the Rebellious times to Act *Tragedies* and *Comedies*, because they contain'd some matter of Scandal to those good People, who could more easily Dispossess their *Lawful Sovereign*, than endure a *Wanton Fest*; he was forc'd to turn his Thoughts another way; and to introduce the Examples of

of Moral Virtue, writ in Verse, and perform'd in Recitative Musick.

The Original of this Musick, and of the Scenes which adorn'd his Work, he had from the Italian Opera's: But he heighten'd his Characters (as I may probably imagine, says Dryden) from the Example of Corneille, and some French Poets. In this Condition did this part of Poetry remain at his Majesties Return. When growing bolder, as being now own'd by a Publick Authority, D'avenant review'd his *Siege of Rhodes*, and caus'd it to be Acted as a just Drama. But as few Men have the happiness to begin and finish any new Project, so neither did he live to make his Design perfect: There wanted the fullness of a Plot, and the variety of Characters to form it as it ought: And perhaps, says Dryden, somewhat might have been added to the beauty of the Stile. All which he would have perform'd with more exactness, had he pleas'd to have given us another Work of the same Nature. For my self (says Dryden) and others who come after him, we are bound, with all Veneration to his Memory, to acknowledge what advantage we receiv'd from that excellent Ground-Work which he laid: And since it is an easie thing to add to what already is invented, we ought all of us, says Dryden, without envy to him, or partiality to our selves, to yield him the precedence in it. *Dryd. Essay of Heroick Plays.*

Rimer, in the Preface to his Translation of Rapin's Reflexions, &c. tells us, That D'avenant's Wit is well known; and that in the Preface to his *Gondibert*, appear some Strokes of an Extraordinary Judgment: That he is for *Unbeaten Tracks*, and *New Ways of Thinking*; but that certainly in his untry'd Seas he is no great Discoverer.

One design of the *Epick Poets* before him, was to adorn their own Country, there finding their *Heroes* and patterns of *Vertue*; whose Example (as they thought) would have greatest influence and power over Post-erity; but *this Poet*, says *Rimer*, steers a different Course, his *Heroes* are all Forreigners: *He* cultivates a Coun-try, that is nothing akin to him, 'tis *Lombardy* that reaps the honour of all.

Other Poets chose some *Action* or *Heroe* so illustrious, that the Name of the *Poem* prepar'd the Reader, and made way for its reception: But in *this Poem*, says *Rimer*, none can divine, what *Great Action* he intended to celebrate; nor is the Reader oblig'd to know whe-ther the *Heroe* be *Turk* or *Christian*. Nor do the first Lines give any light or Prospect into his *Design*. Me-thinks, says *Rimer*, though his Religion could not dis-pence with an *Invocation*, he needed not have scrupl'd at the *Proposition*: Yet he rather chuses to enter in at the top of an House, because the Mortals of *Mean* and *Satisfied Minds* go in at the Door. And I believe, says *Rimer*, the Reader is not well pleas'd to find his *Poem* begin with the praises of *Aribert*, when the Title had promis'd a *Gondibert*. But before he falls on any other business, he presents the Reader with a Descrip-tion of each particular *Heroe*, not trusting their *Actions* to speak for them; as former *Poets* had done. *Their* practice was fine and artificial, *his* (he tells us) is a *New way*. Many of his *Characters* have but little of the *Heroick* in them; *Dalga* is a *Jilt*, proper only for *Comedy*; *Birtha* for a *Pastoral*; and *Astragon*, in the manner here describ'd, yields no very great Ornament to an *Heroick Poem*; nor are his *Battles*, less liable to *Censure*, than those of *Homer*.

He dares not, as other *Heroick Poets*, heighten the Action, by making *Heaven* and *Hell* interess'd, for fear of offending against *Probability*, and yet he tells of

—*Threads by patient Parcæ slowly spun.*

And for being dead, his Phrase is,

“*Heaven call'd him, where peacefully he rules a Star.*

And the *Emerald* he gives to *Birtha*, has a stronger tang of the Old Woman, and is a greater improbability, than all the Enchantments in *Tasso*. A just Medium (says Rimer) reconciles the farthest Extreams, and one preparation may give credit to the most unlikely Fiction. In *Marino*, *Adonis* is presented with a *Diamond-Ring*, where, indeed, the Stone is much-what of the same Nature; but this Present is made by *Venus*: And from a Goddess could not be expected a Gift of Ordinary Virtue.

Although a Poet is oblig'd to know all Arts and Sciences, yet he ought discreetly to mannage this Knowledge. He must have Judgment to select what is noble or beautiful, and proper for his occasion. He must by a particular *Chymistry* extract the Essence of Things, without soiling his Wit with the gros and trumpery. But some Poets labour to appear skilful with that wretched affectation, they dote on the very terms and jargon: Exposing themselves rather to be laught at by the *Apprentices*, than to be admir'd by *Philosophers*: But whether *D'avenant* be one of those, I leave others to examine.

The sort of *Verse* he makes choice of, in his *Gondibert*, might, as *Rimer* supposes, contribute much to the Vitiating of his *Stile*; for thereby he obliges himself to stretch every Period to the end of four Lines: Thus the Sense is broken perpetually with *Parentheses*, the Words jumbl'd in confusion, and a darkness spread over all; so that the Sense is either not discern'd, or found not sufficient for one just *Verse*, which is sprinkl'd on the whole *Tetraastick*.

In the *Italian* and *Spanish*, where all the Rhymes are *dissyllable*, and the percussion stronger, this kind of *Verse* may be necessary; and yet to temper that grave March, they repeat the same *Rhyme* over again, and then they close the *Stanza* with a *Couplet*, further to sweeten the Severity. But in *French* and *English*, where we Rhime generally with only one Syllable, the *Stanza* is not allow'd, much less the *alternate Rhyme* in long *Verse*; for the sound of the *Monosyllable Rhyme* is either lost e're we come to its Correspondent, or we are in pain by the so long expectation and suspense. This *alternate Rhyme*, and the downright *Morality* throughout whole *Canto's* together, says *Rimer*, shew *D'avenant* better acquainted with the *Quatrains* of *Pybrach*, which he speaks of, than with any true Models of *Epick Poesie*.

After all, says *Rimer*, *D'avenant* is said to have a particular Talent for the *Manners*; his Thoughts are great, and there appears something roughly Noble throughout this Fragment; which, had he been pleas'd to finish it, would, doubtless, not have been left so open to the Attack of *Criticks*. *Rimer's Pref.* to his *Translat.* of *Rapin's Reflex.* on *Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie*.

To

To conclude, as Sir William D'avenant was a Wit himself, and would often play upon others; so he sometimes had it return'd upon him, as appears by these following Verses of Sir John Suckling:

Will. D'avenant asham'd of a foolish Mischance,
That he had got lately Travelling into France,
Modestly hoped the Handsomness of's Muse,
Might any of Dormity about him excuse.

And

Surely the Company would have been content,
If they could have found any President;
But in all their Records, either in Verse or Prose,
There was not one Laureat without a Nose.

Sir John Denham.

HE was the only Son of Sir John Denham of Little Horsely in Essex, but born at Dublin in Ireland. His Father being at the time of his Birth a Judge of that Kingdom, and Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer. But before the foggy Air of that Climate could influence, or any way vitiate his Mind, he was brought from thence, his Father being preferr'd to be one of the Barons of the Exchequer in England. At Sixteen Years of Age, Anno 1631. he was taken from School, and sent to the University of Oxford, where he became a Member of Trinity Colledge. In this Society he spent some Years; but afterwards returning to London, he

follow'd the Study of the *Civil Law*. But the Civil War breaking out, he zealously espousing the Interest of the *Royal Party*, was forc'd to go beyond Sea; and at his Majesties departure from St. Germain to Jersey, he was pleas'd, without any sollicitation, to confer upon Sir John, the Office of *Surveyor General* of all his Majesties Royal Buildings; and at his Coronation created him *Knight of the Bath*.

He dyed on the Tenth of *March*, 1668, at his House near *White Hall*, and was buried the 23d following at *Westminster*, amongst those famous Poets, *Chaucer*, *Spencer*, and *Cowley*.

Winstanley, in the Lives of the *English Poets*, says, That Sir John Denham was a Gentleman, who, to his other Honours, had this added, That he was one of the chief of the *Delphick Quire*, and for his Writings worthy to be Crown'd with a Wreath of Stars. The Excellency of his Poetry may be seen in his *Coopers Hill*, which (says *Winstanley*) whosoever shall deny, can be accounted no Friends to the *Muses*: His Tragedy of the *Sophy*, is equal to any of the Chiefest Authors, which, with his other Works bound together in one Volume, will make his Name famous to all Posterity.

Dryden, in his *Epist. Dedic.* to *Rival Ladies*, tells us, That Sir John Denham's *Coopers Hill*, is a Poem, which for the Majesty of the Style, is, and ever will be, the exact Standard of good Writing.

Gerard Langbaine, in his Account of the *English Dramatick Poets*, calls Sir John Denham, a Poet of the First Form, whose Virtue and Memory will ever be as dear to all Lovers of Poetry, as his Person was to Majesty it self; viz. King *Charles the First* and *Second*.

His Verses on Sir Richard Fanshaw's Translation of *Il Pastor Fido*, and his Preface to the *Destruction of Troy*, shew sufficiently his Judgment, and his Translations themselves his Genius, for Performances of that Nature: And admitting it true, that few Persons deserve Praise; yet, says Langbaine, His are to be excepted from the General Rule. His Elegy on Mr. Cowley, will make his Name famous to Posterity: And there wants nothing to eternise his Name, but a Pen equal to his, (if any such were to be found) to perform the like friendly Office to his Manes.

Antonius à Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, pag. 302. informs us, That in the latter end of the Year 1641. Sir John Denham publish'd the Tragedy call'd the *Sophy*, which took extreamly much, and was admir'd by all Ingenious Men, particularly by Edm. Waller of Beaconsfield, who then said of the Author, That he broke out like the Irish Rebellion, Threescore Thousand strong, when no body was aware, or in the least suspected it.

John Donne,

WAS born in London, in the Year 1573. About the Seventeenth Year of his Age he was admitted into Lincolne's Inn, whither he betook himself from the University of Oxford; but instead of poring upon tedious Reports, Judgments, and Statute-Books, he accomplish'd himself with the Politer kind of Learning, moderately enjoy'd the Pleasures of the Town,

and frequented good Company, to which the sharpness of his Wit, and gaiety of Fancy, rendred him not a little gratesful ; in which state of Life, he compos'd his more brisk and youthful Poems, which are rather commended for the Height of Fancy, and acuteness of Conceit, than for the smoothness of the Verse. At last, by King James's Command, or rather earnest perswasion, setting himself to the Study of Divinity, and entering into Holy Orders, he was first made Preacher of *Lincolne's-Inn*, and afterwards advanc'd to be *Dean of Pauls*: And as of an eminent Poet he became a much more eminent Preacher, so he rather improv'd than relinquisht his *Poetical Fancy*; only converting it from Humane and Wordly, to Divine and Heavenly Subjects. He died the last of *March*, 1631.

Isaac Walton, in the Life of *John Donne*, pag. 52. says, That the Recreations of his Youth were *Poetry*, in which he was so happy, as if *Nature* and all her Varieties had been made only to exercise his sharp Wit, and high Fancy : And in those Pieces, which were facetiously Compos'd, and carelessly scatter'd (most of them being written before the Twentieth Year of his Age) it may appear by his choice *Metaphors*, that both *Nature* and all the *Arts* joyned to assist him with their utmost Skill.

The Publisher of Mr. *Waller's* 2d Part of his *Poems*, in the *Preface*, tells us, That we are beholden to Mr. *Waller* for the new-turn of *Verse*, which he brought in, and the improvement he made in our *Numbers*. Before his time, Men Rhym'd indeed, and that was all; as for the harmony of Measure, and that dance of Words, which good Ears are so much pleas'd with, they knew nothing of it. *Their Poetry then* was made up almost entirely

entirely of *Monosyllables*; which, when they come together in any Cluster, are certainly the most harsh, untunable Things in the World. If any Man (says my Author) doubts of this, let him read ten Lines in *Donne*, and he'll be quickly convinc'd.

Dryden remarks, That *Donne* has great Variety, Multiplicity, and Choice of Thoughts; but he affects the *Metaphyficks*, not only in his *Satires*, but in his *Amorous Verses*, where *Nature* only should reign; and perplexes the Minds of the *Fair Sex* with nice Speculations of Philosophy, when he shou'd engage their Hearts, and entertain them with the *Softnesses of Love*. Dryd. Dedic. before *Juvenal*, pag. 3.

Would not *Donne's Satires*, which abound with so much Wit, appear more Charming, if he had taken care of his *Words*, and of his *Numbers*? But he follow'd *Horace* so very close, that of necessity he must fall with him: And, says Dryden, I may safely say it of this present Age, That if we are not so great *Wits* as *Donne*, yet, certainly, we are better *Poets*. Dryd. ibid. pag. 46.

Quintus Ennius,

THE Ancientst of the *Latin Poets* that we hear of, except *Livius Andronicus*, and *Cn. Nævius*. He was born at *Rudiae*, a City of *Calabria* in *Spain*, in the Second Year of the 135th Olympiad. 237 Years before *Christ*. He was brought to *Rome* first by *Cato Censorius*, for his Learning. He died of the *Gout*, which he got by

by his immoderate drinking of *Wine*, when he was above Seventy Years of Age.

He wrote besides his *Annals* in Verse, *Satyrs*, *Comedies*, and *Tragedies*; of all which we have nothing now remaining, but only some few Fragments.

This *Author* was so entirely belov'd of *Scipio Africanus* (whom he accompanied in the Wars, and Wrote a *Poems* in Hexameter Verse, of the Second *Punick War*) that he caused the Image of *Ennius* to be set on his Sepulchre.

Cicero, in his *Oration for L. Muræna*, cap. xiv. calls *Ennius*, an Ingenious Poet, and a very good Author.

Horace, in the First Epist. of his Second Book, Verse 50. says, That *Ennius* had both Wisdom and Courage, and that he was a *Second Homer*.

What Opinion *Lucretius* had of *Ennius*, appears in his first Book, verse 117. &c.

*Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amæno
Detulit ex Helicone perenni fronde Coronam;
Per gentes Italas omnium quæ clara clueret.
Etsi prætcrea tamen esse Acherusia templa
Ennius æternis exponit versibus edens.*

*As our Fam'd Ennius sings, upon whose Brow
The first and freshest Crowns of Laurel grow,
That ever Learned Italy could show;
Tho' he in lasting Numbers doth express
The Stately Acherusian Palaces.*

Englisch'd by *Tho. Creech*.

Notwithstanding it is reported of *Virgil*, that being one day found reading of *Ennius*, and some body asking him

him what he had been doing, his answer was, *Se aurum in Sterquilinio colligere*, That, *He had been gathering Gold out of a Dunghill*: Yet *Macrobius*, lib. 6. *Saturnal.* cap. 1. assures us, That *Virgil* was so great an admirer of *Ennius*, that he had stole many things out of him; some instances whereof *Macrobius* does there give us.

Paulus Merula, in the beginning of his *Comment* upon the *Fragments* of *Ennius's Annals*, says, That *Ennius* was really the *Father* of all that *Elegance*, and *Politeness*, which afterwards appear'd amongst the *Latin Poets*.

Lilius Gyraldus, in his Fourth Dialogue *De Poetis Antiquis*, informs us, That *Ennius* had a sharp Wit, and that he was very quick and ready with his Pen; that his Sentences were smart, tho' his Words and Phrase were plain and without Art, forasmuch as he would always keep to the common Dialect.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligeriana* 1. pag. 78. tells us, That *Ennius* the Ancient Poet, was one of a High and Lofty Genius; and that he had so great a value for him, that for his part he could be contented with the loss of *Lucan*, *Statius*, *Silius Italicus*, and the rest of those Sparks, provided we could have *Ennius* Entire and Complete.

Adrianus Turnebus, in the Thirteenth Book of his *Adversaria*, cap. 6. says, That *Ennius's Verses* have somewhat in them of the same Nature with *Wine*, which we generally count the better, and the pleasanter, for being Old.

And in another Place in his *Adversaria*, he tells us, That the Verses of *Ennius* contain both Profit and Pleasure; and that his Style (tho' one would not think it) is Polite.

Rapin remarks, That *Ennius* had not in his days discover'd the Grace and Harmony, which is in the Numbers, whereof appears no footstep in his Verse. Rap. Reflex. on Arist. Treatise of Poesie, part I. sect. 37.

Euripides,

A Learned Tragical Poet, born at Salamis, the very day that *Xerxes*'s great Army was Routed by the Athenians, in the first Year of the 75th Olympiad, about 480 Years before Christ. He was in great favour with Archelaus King of Macedon. He Wrote in all 75 Plays. For his great Chastity, and avoiding the Company of Women, he was call'd *Miroviris*, Woman-hater; altho' he was Twice Married: Concerning his death there are divers Relations; some think he was worried by Archelaus's Dogs, that were set upon him by the malice of the Poet *Aridaeus*, that envid him and *Cratena*; Others, that he was pulled in Pieces by Women. He died in the 75th Year of his Age, and was buried at *Pella*.

Of his 75 Plays, there are now remaining but 19.

Cicero, in a Letter to *Tyro*, lib. 16. Familiar. Epist. tells him, That he had a very great value for Euripides, and that every Verse of this Author bore a mighty Credit with him.

Rimer, in his Short View of Tragedy, pag. 158. says, That at Athens (they tell us) the Tragedies of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, were enroll'd with their Laws, and made part of their Statute-Book.

Dryden,

Dryden, in his *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, pag. 10. tells us, That while the *Tragedies* of Euripides, Sophocles, and Seneca are in our hands, he can never see one of those Plays which are now Written, but it increases his Admiration of the *Ancients*; and yet he must acknowledge further, that to admire them as we ought, we should understand them better than we do. Doubtless many things appear flat to us, the Wit of which depended on some *Custom* or *Story*, which never came to our Knowledge, or perhaps on some *Criticisme* in their Language, which (says Dryden) being so long dead, and only remaining in their Books, 'tis not possible they should make us understand perfectly.

Borrichius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. de Poetis*, pag. 30. observes to us, That Euripides for Eloquence, and Prudence, was equal to, if not beyond Sophocles. Euripides took more care in the placing of his Words, and ordering of his Sentences, than ever Sophocles did; and yet Aristotle thought him not exact enough in the contrivance of his *Fables*. Sophocles, by his Stile, seems to be rather a Man for *Business*, than for *Words*; whereas the Stile of Euripides favours more of the *Scholar* and the *Orator*: And therefore if we are for the lofty, and sublime Tragedy, Sophocles carries it; but if for fine Language, then Euripides has it.

Borrichius also informs us, That Euripides is often blam'd by the Learned, for his not observing *Poetical Probability*, which is a thing that Aristotle recommends so highly to all *Poets*; which (indeed) is most agreeable to that prudent advice of Horace in his *De Arte Poeticâ*:

Aut Famam sequere, aut sibi convenientia finge.

Rapin remarks, That the *Tragedies* of *Euripides* have more of *Action*, of *Morality*, and of wonderful *Incidents*, than those of *Sophocles*.

He also observes, That *Euripides* is not exact in the Contrivance of his *Fables*; his *Characters* want variety, he falls often into the same Thoughts, on the same adventures; that he does not Religiously enough observe *Decencies*; and by a too great affectation to be *Moral* and *Sententious*, he is not so ardent and passionate as he ought to be; for this reason (says Rapin) he goes not to the Heart, so much as *Sophocles*; there are precipitations in the preparation of his *Incidents*, as in the *Suppliants*, where *Theseus* Levies an Army, Marches from *Athens* to *Thebes*, and returns on the same day. The Discoveries of his Plots are not at all Natural, these are perpetual *Machins*; *Diana* makes the discovery in the Tragedy of *Hippolitus*; *Minerva* that of the *Iphigenia in Taurica*; *Thetis* that of *Andromache*; *Castor* and *Pollux*, that of *Helena*, and that of *Electra*; and so of others. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie, part 2. sect. xxi, and xxii.

Rimer tells us, That *Euripides* has been blam'd for making his *Characters* more wicked than they ought to be in *Tragedy*: That he was not taxed by *Aristophanes* and *Aristotle* only, but by *Sophocles*, and the general Sense of *Athens* was against him. They said, in those days, that *Comedy* (whose Province was Humour and ridiculous matter only) was to represent Things worse than the truth: *History* to describe the truth, but *Tragedy* was to invent Things better than the truth. Like good *Painters* they must design their Images like the Life, but yet better and more beautiful than the Life. The *Malefactor* of *Tragedy*, says *Rimer*, must be a better sort of *Malefactor* than those that live in the present

present Age. For an obdurate, impudent, and impenitent *Malefactor* can neither move *Compassion* nor *Terror*; nor be of any imaginable use in *Tragedy*. *Ritter's Tragedies of the last Age consider'd, &c.* pag. 36.

Caius Valerius Flaccus,

BORN at *Setia*, now call'd *Sezze*, a City in *Campania* *di Roma*, in *Italy*, but liv'd most part of his time at *Padua*. He writ eight Books of *Argonauticks*, being a Poem of the Expedition of *Jason*, for the *Golden-Fleece*, which he dedicated to the Emperour *Domitian*; which Poem being extant, he is said to have written in imitation of *Appollonius Rhodius*.

Quintilian was very much concern'd, that *Valerius Flaccus* being snatch'd away by an untimely death, could not finish his *Argonauticks*; which, as he complains, was a great loss to the Learned:

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poetica*, cap. 6. pag. 639. uses the very same Argument to excuse the harsh Style of this Author, viz. because he died before he had time to review his *Argonauticks*; but withal he tells us, That he was a Man of Wit, of a happy Fancy, of a solid Judgment, and of extraordinary diligence and application; and that his *Verses* have a pleasant and harmonious sound: Though at the same time he owns, that this *Poem*, has none of those other *Graces* and *Beauties* requisite to *Poetry*. But in conclusion, he says, That *Flaccus* was above the pitch of an ordinary Poet.

Caspar Barthius, in the first Book, and seventeenth Chapt. of his *Adversaria*, tells us, That *Valerius Flaccus* is really a more considerable Poet, than generally he is allow'd to be; and that they are either *Pedants* or your half-learned Men, who neglect to read him, through an Opinion, that his Stile is harsh and disagreeable; whereas, says *Barthius*, I take him to be a Poet of a Noble, and an elevated Air.

He further observes, in the Twenty Sixth Book, Chap. 3. how very unjust even some of the Learned are to *Valerius Flaccus*, in the not owning his *Poetical Genius*, his Learning, his Gravity, and his Judgment. And he also makes this further *Remarque*, that *Valerius Flaccus* appears more considerable when he Marches alone, and without a guide, than when he treads in the footsteps of *Appollonius Rhodius*.

Borrichius, in his *Dissert. Acad. de Poetis*, pag. 61. says There must be acknowledg'd in *Valerius Flaccus*, although he was not come to his Perfection, a true *Poetical Genius*; that he had very often high, and Noble Flights, that his Judgment was Solid, and his Style florid enough, though sometimes it had unevennesses, and seem'd a little rugged, which undoubtedly he would have soften'd, and mended, had he liv'd some time longer.

Rapin observes to us, That *Valerius Flaccus* in his *Argonauticks* was both cold and flat, through his affecting a loftiness of Expression, and not having a *Genius* for it. *Rap. Reflex. on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie*, part 1. sect. xxx.

He also tells us, That the Poem of *Valerius Flaccus*, on the *Argonauts*, is extreamly mean; the *Fable*, the *Contrivance*, the *Conduit*, all there are of a very low Character. *Rap. ibid. part 2. sect. xv.*

Joannes.

Joannes Ludovicus Vives, in his third Book *De Trandendis Disciplinis*, pag. 541. says, He does not see to what purpose one should read either *Valerius Flaccus*, or *Appollonius Rhodius*, as if a Man could not spend his time better; and yet he says, he does not so much dislike either their *Verse* or their *Stile*, as the meanness of the *Subject*.

Hieronymus Fracastorius,

WAS born at *Verona*, but dyed at *Padua* of an Apoplexy, on the Sixth day of *August*, 1553. being above Seventy Years of Age.

Boissardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illustrium*, stiles *Fracastorius* a Person of the greatest Learning; as being a Physician, a Poet, an Astronomer, and the most Learned Philosopher of that Age: In which several Sciences, according to *Boissardus*, he got so great a Reputation, that he very well deserv'd to be counted equal to any of the *Ancients*.

He further saith, That *Fracastorius*'s Poems, are so much esteem'd of among all the Men of Learning, that they are compar'd even with *Virgil's*; and that in respect of their Elegance, smartnes of Expression, and purity of Style, they are so highly extoll'd, that by many *Fracastorius* is call'd, *The Divine Poet*.

Thuanus, in his History of the Year, 1553. says; That *Fracastorius* had (besides his exact Knowledge of Philosophy, and the *Mathematicks*, and especially *Astronomy*, which he had most Learnedly illustrated,) an exquisite

quisite Judgment, and an admirable Wit: By which means he had both found out, and explain'd many things either altogether unknown to, or else not well understood by the *Ancients*; That he never made any other gain by his Practice of Physick, than his own Glory and Reputation; and that he had so much improv'd the Art of Poetry, that even by the Confession of his *Rivals* he was little inferiour to *Virgil* himself: And this made *Jacobus Sannazarius* (who was not overapt to commend other Mens Learning,) upon the sight of *Fracastorius's Poem of Syphilis*, to cry out, That not only *Joannes Jovianus Pontanus*, but that *He himself* was overcome in his Poem, which was so accurate, that, as *Thuanus* tells us, it had cost him no less than twenty Years Study and Labour.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poetica*, pag. 817. speaking of *Fracastorius's Poems*, says, They are so perfect, that they rather deserve his *Admiration*, than his *Censure*. *He* also styles *Fracastorius*, the very best Poet next *Virgil*; adding at the same time, that the *Syphilis* was a Divine Poem.

To conclude, for a Testimony of the great esteem *Julius Scaliger* had of this Extraordinary Person, he Wrote a Poem in his Praise, Entituled *Aræ Fracastoreæ*.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana I.* observes, That *Fracastorius* shew'd himself an Excellent Poet in his *Syphilis*.

Gerardus Johannes Vossius, in his *de Mathematicis*, pag. 375. reckons *Fracastorius* among the chief Ornaments of that Age: *He* also tells us, that his Fellow Citizens, after his Death, erected his Statue at *Verona* in Marble, as they had formerly done to *Catullus* and *Pliny*.

Mr. Tate in the Life of *Fracastorius*, before his Translation of *Syphilis*, says, That *Fracastorius* was descended from the *Fracastorian Family* of great Antiquity in *Verona*; and that he seem'd not only to Rival the Fame of *Catullus* and *Pliny*, who had long before made that City Renown'd, but to have very far exceeded all his Contemporaries, for Learning and Poetry.

He further observes, That *Fracastorius* was never Censorious of other Mens performances, but always glad of an occasion to commend; for which he was deservedly celebrated by *Johannes Baptista* in a Noble *Epigram*. In his leisure, says *Tate*, he diverted himself with Reading *History*, at which time *Polybius*, or *Plutarch*, were never out of his hands. To conclude, the Age in which he liv'd (says *Tate*) saw nothing equal to his Learning, but his Honesty.

Borrighius, in his *Dissert. Acad. De Poetis*, pag. 98. highly commends those two Poems of *Fracastorius*, his *Syphilis*, and his *Alcon*; He says, they shew him to be both a man of Learning, and of Prudence; but at the same time he observes, this Poet was not always exact in Numbers, and Cadence, and that he rather chose to *Instruct*, than to *delight* the Reader.

Rapin observes to us, That *Fracastorius*, who with so good Success Writ his *Syphilis*, the most excellent Poem in Latin Verse that these latter Ages have produced in Italy, and which is Writ in imitation of *Virgil's Georgicks*, was not so happy in his Epick Poem of *Joseph*, Viceroy of Egypt, a Fragment whereof is Extant; for this Poem, says *Rapin*, is of a poor Genius, and a low Character. *Rap. Reflex. on Arist. Treatise of Poesie*, part 1. sect. xiv.

The same Author does also remark, That *Fracastorius* has only Copied *Virgil's Phrases*, without expressing his Spirit;

Spirit; that he has (indeed) some touches of that noble *Air*, but not many; that whenever he strains to come up to *Virgil*, he presently *falls* and returns again to his own *Genius*; and that amidst the vain *Efforts* of a *Servile Imitation*, there continually escapes from him some *Strokes* of his own natural Spirit. *Rap*, *ibid. sect. xxxii.*

Hugo Grotius,

WAS born at *Delph* in *Holland*, the Tenth day of *April*, 1583. He dyed at *Rostock*, a City of the *Lower-Saxony*, the Eighteenth day of *August*, Old *Style*, 1645.

Edward Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, says, That *Grotius's* Equal in Fame for Wit and Learning, *Christendom* of late Ages hath rarely produc'd; that he was particularly of so happy a *Genius in Poetry*, that had his *Annals*, his Book *De Veritate Christianæ Religionis*, his *De Satisfactione Christi*, and other his extolled Works in *Prose*, never come to Light, his Extant and Universally approv'd *Latin Poems*, had been sufficient to gain him an everlasting Name.

Hofman, in his *Lexicon*, calls *Grotius*, The *Phœnix of the Age*.

Salmasius, in his Exercitations upon *Solinus*, stiles him, One that was exquisitely Learned in all sorts of Learning.

Selden, in the first Book, chap. 26. of his *Mare Clavum*, says, That *Hugo Grotius*, was a Man of great Learning,

ing, and extraordinary Knowledge in things both Divine, and Humane.

Gerardus Johannes Vossius, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, pag. 82. calls *Grotius*, the great Ornament, or rather the Miracle of the Age. Than whom, as he tells us, in his *De Historicis Latinis*, pag. 713. the Sun does not shine upon, nor is there living upon the Face of the Earth, any Creature of greater Learning.

Iсаac Casaubon, in his *Epist. 738.* to *Daniel Heinsius*, Dated in April 1613. tells him, he could not sufficiently proclaim his own happiness, in the enjoying sometimes the Company of that great Man, *Hugo Grotius*. A Person highly to be admir'd! The excellency of whose Divine Wit, no man could be able throughly to comprehend, unless he observes both his Countenance, and his way of speaking. *He says*, There was Honesty in his very Looks; and his Discourse did sufficiently shew his Exquisite Learning, and his great Sincerity. And that you may not (*says Casaubon*) think that I am the only one who Admires him; all Men of either Learning or Piety, who are acquainted with him, have also the very same Opinion of him.

David Blondel, in his Second Book, chap. 3. of the *Sybils*, having occasion to mention *Grotius*, he there gives him this Character, that he was a Man of extraordinary Endowments, whether we consider the Transcendency of his Wit, the Universality of his Knowledge, which cannot be too highly esteem'd, and the Diversity of his Writings.

Monsieur de Balzac, in his Fifth Book, Letter the 25. to *Chappelain*, thus remarks of *Grotius*, That besides his solid Learning, his forcible way of Reasoning, and his florid Style, there is observable a certain *Air of Honesty* in all the Works of this Great Man; and that this is

more, than any one dare say either of *Scaliger* or *Salmasius*.

Claudius Sarravius, in his *Preface* to *Grotius's Epistles*, makes this Observation, That though *Grotius* in all his other Works, appear'd to be a great Man; yet in his *Epistles* and *Poems*, he was Incomparable and Divine.

Borrichius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. de Poetis*, pag. 142. says, That never any thing was more Learned, than the Works of *Hugo Grotius* in Divine Matters. What (says he) can be finer, or more Masculine than his *Epick Poem* concerning the History of *Jonas*? Or was there ever any thing Writ in a more Chast and Purer Style, than the *Elegies* he Composed upon the Subject of *Susanna*? And he further tells us, That nothing can be Graver, or more Majestick than his Two *Tragedies*, *Christus Patiens*, and his *Sophompaneas*, although they have fallen under the *Censure* of some *Criticks*: And that as for his *Epigrams*, and his *Sylvæ*, they likewise deserve their Commendation, and Praise; though it must be allow'd, there is not the same *Wit* and *Smartness* in all of them; but that *some* are much better than others.

Rapin tells us, That *Grotius* has Writ nobly enough in *Latin Verse*; but that the great Learning where-with he was fraught, hinder'd him from thinking things in that *Delicate* manner, which makes the *Beauty* *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Arist.* *Treatise of Poesie*, part 2. sect. xvi.

He also remarks, That *Grotius* in his *Tragedy of Joseph*, has a *Contrivance* too simple, the *Incidents* are cold, the *Narrations* tedious, the *Passions* forc'd, and the *Style* constrain'd. *Rap.* *ibid. sect. 23.*

Grotius's

Grotius's Poems, Collected, and Publish'd by his Brother William Grotius, are Prohibited by the Church of Rome.

Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus,

AN Italian, born in *Ferrara*, the 14th. of June, in the Year 1478. He Dyed of the Gout, in the Month of *February*, in the Year 1552.

He was Author of several *Poems*; besides what he Wrote in *Prose*, as his History of the Heathen Gods, and his Large Volume concerning both the Ancient Greek and Latin Poets, as also of the Poets who liv'd in his time, and many other things, which have given him an Honourable Memory.

Hofman, in his *Lexicon*, says, That *Gyraldus* did very well deserve to be call'd the *Varro* of that Age, inasmuch as he was one of an Invincible Memory, an excellent Wit, and very famous for all sorts of Learning.

Isaac Casaubon, in his Notes upon the Eighth Book of *Diogenes Laertius*, stiles *Gyraldus*, a Man of Solid Learning, and one who Wrote with great accuracy.

Thuanus, in his History of the Year 1552. affirms, That *Gyraldus* was very well skill'd both in the *Greek* and *Latin*, as also in the Politer sort of Learning, and particularly in Antiquity, which he had Illustrated by several of his *Pieces*. But in conclusion he says, That though *Gyraldus* deserv'd a better *Fate*, yet all his Life time he struggl'd with sickness and Misfortunes.

Leander Albertus, in his Description of *Italy*, says, That *Gyraldus* had so happy a Memory, that whatever he once read, he never forgot.

Moreri, in his *Grand Dictionnaire*, assures us, That in the Opinion of all Men, *Gyraldus* was accounted one of the greatest Wits, that *Italy* had produc'd in these latter Ages; and that he had made so wonderful a Progrest in all the Sciences, that there was not any of them, but he was Master of.

Gerardus Jobannes Vossius, lib. I. *Idololatr.* cap. 29. observes to us, That *Gyraldus* had a Judgment equal to his Learning. And in his *De Histor. Latin.* pag. 736. he tells us, That *Gyraldusw* was Man of much greater Learning, and Diligence, than ever *Petrus Crinitus* was.

The same Author, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, pag. 82. speaking of *Gyraldus's* History concerning the Poets, calls it a Work not only of great Wit and Judgment, but also of vast Learning and Industry: *He says*, There is indeed here and there a Poet, whose History might have been more accurately Written; but take it throughout, it is a Work of so much Perfection, that even the most Learned may well be discourag'd, from ever hoping for better success in so vast an Undertaking.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag. 99. says, That as *Gyraldus* hath shew'd a great deal of Learning and Judgment in his History concerning the *Ancient Greek* and *Latin Poets*, so has he writ of the Poets of his Time, with all the Truth and Freedom imaginable.

But *Joseph Scalizer*, in his *Confut. Fab. Bourdon. &c.* is of another Opinion, for he there tells us, That nothing in Nature is so silly and ridiculous, as *Gyraldus's* Censure on the Poets; tho' at the same time he is pleas'd to

to say, That he was a Man of much Reading, and great Knowledge.

The Works of *this Author* are inserted in the *Index Expurgatorius*, Printed at *Madrid*, Anno 1667.

Daniel Heinsius,

WAS born at *Gaunt* in *Flanders*, in the Month of *May*, 1580. He was History Professor, and Library-Keeper at the University of *Leyden*. He died the 25th of *February*, 1655.

He was no less eminent for his Excellent Style in *Greek* and *Latin Verse*, of which sufficient Testimonies are extant, than for his several Learned Works which he wrote in *Prose*.

Gabriel Naudæus, in his 59th *Epiſt. to Joannes Beverovicius*, dated the third *Kal. of Sept.* 1657. says, That he had so great a Veneration for *Dan. Heinsius*, that he thought his very Name to be almost *Divine*.

Jacobus Crucius, in an *Epiſt. to Dan. Colonius*, dated the xxth of *Febr.* 1621. gives this Character of *Dan. Heinsius*, That *Nature* had taken as much Care in the adorning and beautifying this Excellent Person, as ever *Zeuxis* had done, to set forth his *Venus*; or *Phydias* did, to adorn the Statue of *Minerva*.

Johannes Polyander, Rector of the University of *Leyden*, in a Letter to *Joann. Beverovicius*, dated at *Leyden*, July the 24th, 1635. calls *Dan. Heinsius*, the great Ornament of his Age, a Person of admirable Eloquence, of the deepest Learning, and one whom God had

had adorn'd with great skill in the *Eastern* and *Western* Languages.

Caspar Barthius, in the 59th Book of his *Adversaria*, chap. 13. says, That *Dan. Heinsius* had not his Fellow for Wit, Learning, and Eloquence; that he was the chief Writer of the Age; in many things *Superiour* to most of the *Ancients*, but in few was he their *Inferior*; that his *Greek* and *Latin Poems*, as also his great Learning and Eloquence, the Ages to come would both love and reverence; that the *Graces* and *Beauties* of his *Style* deserv'd the highest *Encomiums*, and could not be enough extoll'd; and to conclude, that since the Creation, there had scarce appear'd any thing that was to be compar'd to him.

Isaac Casaubon, in his *Epist. 318.* dated from *Paris*, Jan. 1604, tells *Dan. Heinsius*, that he was a meer *Asteropœus*, a true *Ambodexter*, one who was equally skillful in *Prose* and in *Verse*. He says, when he reads his *Greek Verses*, he fancies himself to be reading *Homer*, not *Heinsius*; and when he reads his *Latin Verses*, then he can't but think he is reading either *Ovid* or *Propertius*.

Antonius Thysius, in the Funeral Oration of *Daniel Heinsius*, says, That no One in that Age was more considerable for *Latin Verse*, and that he had not his Match for *Greek Verse*, unless it were *Joseph Scaliger*.

He further tells us, That nothing ever was more *Divine*, than his *Greek Epigrams*, wherein he describ'd the Actions, Sentiments, and Opinions of the Ancient Philosophers; that his *Pandora* was a most Elegant Piece; and, in a word, that never since the *Ancient Greek Poets*, there has been any thing of greater Perfection, nor nearer approaching their Character, than what *Heinsius* has done in their Language. And as for his *Elegies*,

gies, he says, They are to the highest degree full of *Passion* and *Harmony*, and that he has represented in them, all the Wit and Beauty of *Ovid*. See *Henning Witten*. Tom. 2. *De Philosophis*, pag. 180, 181.

Daniel Georgius Morhofius, in his *Polyhistor*, pag. 62. tells us, That he was wont often to read, with a great deal of Pleasure, the Verses writ by those two Great Men, *Hugo Grotius*, and *Dan. Heinsius*, in their younger Years; which though (says he) were very short of what they afterwards perform'd; yet it was very pretty to observe that curious *Blossom*, which not long after produc'd such Excellent *Fruit*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag. 143. says, That *Daniel Heinsius* did very well deserve to be reckon'd among the most considerable *Poets*, he having oblig'd the Learned with several of his *Poems*, of various Kinds; wherein was to be found nothing either mean, dry, or barren; but every thing pure, solid, and exact.

He likewise tells us, that at the same time *Heinsius* gave so high a Character of *Thuanus* and *Scaliger* in *Epic* Verse, he himself deserv'd no less; and that he who has wrote with so much Life and Courage concerning the *Contempt of Death*, must himself needs be immortal. How choice (says he) is the Stile in his *Hipponaete*? and yet how sharp is it every where? What happy bold strokes are there in his *Herodes Infanticida*? And was there ever greater Elegancy than in his *Elegies*?

Rapin remarks, That *Dan. Heinsius* has writ nobly enough in *Latin Verse*; but that the great Learning wherewith he (as well as *Grotius*) was fraught; hinder'd him from thinking Things in that delicate manner, which makes the Beauty of Verse. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Aristot.* &c. part 2. sect. xvi.

He further observes, That Heinßius in his Tragedy of Herod, is tedious in his Narrations, that his Passions are forc'd, and the Stile constrain'd. *Bap. ibid. sect. xxiii.*

Paulus Colomesius, in his *Opuscula*, pag. 128. says, That *Vossius* told him, That one might easily know the Stile of *Daniel Heinßius*, by his so often using the Pronoun, *Qui, Quæ, Quod*. Which (says *Colomesius*) with a great deal of Pleasure I have observ'd to be very true.

Hesiod.

AN Ancient Greek Poet, surnamed *Ascreus*, from *Ascra*, a Town in *Bœotia*, the place not of his Birth, (as hath been generally suppos'd,) but of his Education, according to *Herodotus*, *Strabo*, *Stephanus* and *Valerius Probus*; for he was born at *Cuma* in *Aeolia*; the Son of *Dius* and *Pycimede*; He is affirmed by *Philostratus*, *Velleius Paterculus*, and *M. Varro* (contrary to the Opinion of *Porphyrius* and *Solinus*; the First of whom sets him 100. the other 130. years after) to be Contemporary with *Homer*: which Opinion is confirm'd by an *Epigram* of *Dion*, and the Discourse in the Fifth Book of *Plutarch's Symposiaca*, which makes out that *Homer* and *Hesiod* contended at the Exequies of *Oelycus the Theffalian*, and *Amphidamas of Chalcis*.

His several Works are reckon'd up in all Fourteen, as well Extant as not Extant, in a Catalogue, which is inserted in *Daniel Heinßius's* Edition of this Poet.

Velleius Paterculus, lib. i. stiles *Hesiod*, a Person of a most curious Fancy, one that was famous and remarkable for the sweetness of his Verse; and who coveted nothing so much, as his own Ease and Quiet.

Daniel Heinsius, in the Preface to his Edition of this Poet, Anno 1603. remarks, That among all the Poets, he scarce knew any, but *Homer* and *Hesiod*, who understood how to represent *Nature* in her true *Native dress*; which (says he) is infinitely to be preferr'd before all those *Artful* ways that were us'd in After-Times. He further proceeds to tell us, That which to him seem'd the most wonderful, was, that *Nature* had both begun and perfected at the same time her Work in these two Persons, whom for that very reason he makes no scruple to call *Divine*; adding, that *Nature* had, in both these Authors, exhibited to us, a full and perfect Idea of all *Human Virtue*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag. 10. tells us, That *Hesiod's Poem*, call'd "Εργα τῷ Ήμέρᾳ, was writ with so much Prudence, and Learning, that, even at this day, the reading it may be of great use to all such as apply themselves to *Moral Philosophy*, to *Policy*, to *Oeconomy*, to *Marine Affairs*, and to *Husbandry*. And as for his *Θεογονία*, or the Generation of the Gods, *Borrichius* observes, that we may learn much more by that Piece, than the Title seems to import; since such as are curious in finding out the Nature of Things, discover under the Covert of these Fables, Natural Truths and wholesome Maxims, drawn from the deepest Philosophy: which very Observation was formerly made, even by *Plutarch*, in his Treatise *De Legendis Poetis*.

Tanneguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgment* of the *Lives of the Greek Poets*, says, That *Hesiod* in his Poem, Entituled, "Εργα τῷ Ήμέρᾳ, did much after the manner of

our *Almanack-Writers*, who do sometimes set down the *Fortunate*, and the *Unfortunate Days*; and that this Work, in the main, is not much to be valued.

Ludovicus Vives, in his third Book *De Tradendis Disciplinis*, speaking of *Hesiod's Θεογονία*, says, It is of great use for understanding of the Poets, but in other respects, it is e'en good for nothing.

Dionysius Halicarnassæus, in his *De linguae Græcæ Auctribus*, observes, That *Hesiod's* Stile is both sweet and uniform; and that he chiefly affected the Middle Stile, which is neither too mean, nor too lofty.

And *Quintilian*, lib. 10. cap. 1. tells us, That never any Man excell'd *Hesiod* in that sort of Stile.

The *Anonymous German Author*, in his *Bibliographia Curiosa*, remarks, That *Hesiod* is seldom relish'd but by Men of Learning; and that young People especially take no pleasure in reading him, because the Subject he treats of, is in no wise agreeable to 'em.

Claudius Verderius, in his *Censio Auctorum*, seems to give another Reason of this Disgust, which is, his too frequent repetition of the same Epithets, which (as he observes) is very tedious, and unpleasant to the Reader.

Clemens Alexandrinus, lib. vi. *Stromatum*, takes notice of several Verses, stollen *Verbatim* by *Hesiod* out of *Musæus* the Poet.

Theophilus Gale, in his third Book, chap. 1. sect. vii. of his *Court of the Gentiles*, assures us, That *Hesiod* receiv'd some of his *Choicest Traditions* from the *Sacred Oracles*, if not immediately, yet Originally, as will appear probable to any that shall take the pains to draw up the *Parallel*.

Homer,

THE most Renowned of the Greek Heroick Poets; his true Name was *Melefigenes*, from the River *Meles*, near to which he was born; but he was afterwards call'd *Homerus*, from his *Blindness*; not that he was born blind, but fell blind by an Accident, while he resided at *Smyrna*, in the Diale&t of which Country, at that time, blind People were stiled 'Ophigoi. He flourisht under *Diognetus*, King of the *Athenians*, 302 Years after the Destruction of *Troy*, and 23 Years before *Iphitus* and *Lycurgus* instituted the Olympian Games.

He wrote sundry *Poems*, scatter'd here and there in the Countries where he travell'd; which may be a reason not improbable, why so many Countries should challenge him to be theirs, they having the first *Copies* of his Works, which in succeeding times were gather'd together to make up compleat *Poems*, and were call'd from thence *Rhapsodiæ*, Ραψῳδίαι: Two of these Poems are observ'd to comprehend the two Parts of *Man*: The *Iliads*, describing the Strength and Vigour of the *Body*; and the *Odysses*, the Subtlety and Policy of the *Mind*.

There were no less than *Seven Cities* that contended about *Homer's Birth*, according to that *Distich* of *Sannazarius*:

*Smyrna, Rhodus, Colophon, Salamin, Chius, Argos, Athenæ
Cedite jam; Cælum patria Mæonidæ est.*

Alexander the Great had so high a value for Homer's *Iliads*, that (as Plutarch tells us) he laid it every night under his Bed's head, calling it, The *Institution of Marshal Discipline*.

Alcibiades, the Athenian, coming into a School, commanded them to bring him Homer's Book; when they answer'd they had him not, he struck the Master, and went away, counting it an unworthy thing for a School-Master to be without Homer.

Ælian, in the Second Book of his *Various History*, chap. 30. says, That Plato was at first very much addicted to Poetry, and had wrote Heroick Verses; which afterwards he burnt, perceiving them to be far inferior to Homer's.

In the Twelfth Book, chap. 48. He tells us, That the Indians were wont to sing the Verses of Homer Translated into their own Language; and not only they, but the Persian Kings also, if (says Ælian) we may believe those who relate it.

And in his Thirteenth Book, chap. 22. he relates, That Ptolemæus Philopator having built a Temple to Homer, erected a fair Image of him, and placed about the Image those Cities which contended for Homer. And He further informs us, That Galaton the Painter had drawn Homer Vomiting, and the rest of the Poets gathering it up; signifying, That what They had, was all deriv'd from Him.

Plutarch in his Discourse of Garrulity, or Talkativeness, says, That of all the Commendations that were ever given to a Poet, this is the truest, That only Homer avoided being irksome to his Readers, as one that was always new, and still flourishing, as it were in the Prime of Poetick Beauty.

Macrobius,

Macrobius, in the Fifth Book of his *Saturnalia*, cap. 3. tells us. There are Thrice things equally impossible; to take either from *Jupiter*, his *Thunderbolt*; or from *Hercules*, his *Club*; or from *Homer*, the Honour that's due to every Individual Verse of *His*.

Tanneguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgement* of the Lives of the Greek Poets, remarks, That *Homer* had so great a Vogue among the *Ancients*, that they thought they had at any time a sufficient Proof of a thing, if they could but produce the least passage out of *Homer*, for confirming an Opinion, or resolving any Doubts.

Dionysius Lambinus, in his Notes upon *Horace de Arte Poetica*, says, That herein *Homer* is chiefly to be admir'd, that among all the several Occurrences of *Human Life*, there is not one, but what he hath most aptly and properly, nay he had almost said *Divinely* expressed.

Velleius Paterculus, lib. I. cap. 5. describes *Homer* to be the greatest Wit that ever was, beyond all Compare; and who, in respect of the Nobleness of his Works, and the Lustre of his Verse, was the only one who deserv'd the Name of a Poet.

He likewise Observes, That as there had been none before him that he could Imitate, so there was never any, since his time, who was able to imitate him; and that (except *Homer* and *Archilochus*) there cannot be an Instance given of any one Person, who both begun and perfected the same Thing.

Dionysius Halicarnassaeus Commends *Homer* chiefly for the Contrivance of his Design, the greatness and Majesty of his Expression, and the sweet and passionate motions of his Sentiments.

Quintilian, lib. x. cap. 1. was of the Opinion, That in great Matters never any one us'd a more lofty, and Majestick Style, nor in little things express'd himself more

more properly, than *Homer*; that his Style was easie, and yet concise; that at the same time he was both grave, and agreeable; that he was as much to be admir'd for his *Copiousness*, as his *Brevity*; and, to conclude, that he was as excellent an *Orator*, as he was a *Poet*.

Rapin tells us, That *Homer*, who had a *Genius* accomplish'd for *Poetry*, had the Vastest, Sublimest, Profoundest, and most Universal *Wit* that ever was; 'twas by his *Poems* that all the Worthies of *Antiquity* were form'd: from hence the Lawmakers took the First Plat-form of the Laws they gave to Mankind; The Founders of *Monarchies* and *Commonwealths* from hence took the Model of their *Polities*. Hence the Philosophers found the first Principles of Morality which they have taught the People. Hence Physicians have Studied Diseases, and their Cures: Astronomers have Learn'd the Knowledge of Heaven, and Geometricians of the Earth. Hence Kings and Princes have Learn'd the Art to Govern, and Captains to Form a Battel, to Encamp an Army, to Besiege Towns, to Fight and to gain Victories. From this great Original, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, came to be Philosophers. *Sophocles* and *Euripides* took the haughty Air of the Theatre, and *Idea's* of *Tragedy*: *Zeuxis*, *Apelles*, *Polygnotus*, became such excellent Painters; and *Alexander* the Great so valiant. In fine, says Rapin, *Homer* has been (if I may so say) the first Founder of all Arts and Sciences, and the Pattern of the Wise Men in all Ages. And as he has been in some manner the Author of *Paganism*, the Religion whereof he establish'd by his *Poems*, one may say, That never *Prophet* had so many *Followers* as He. Rap. Reflex. &c. part. I. sect. 4.

Sir Willim Temple says, That *Homer* was without dispute, the most *Universal Genius* that has been known in the World, and *Virgil* the most *Accomplish'd*. To the first must be allow'd, the most fertile Invention, the richest Vein, the most general Knowledge, and the most lively Expressions; To the last, the Noblest Idea's, the justest Institution, the wisest Conduct, and the choicest Elocution. To speak in the *Painters Terms*, says *Temple*, We find in the Works of *Homer*, the most Spirit, Force, and Life; In those of *Virgil*, the best Design, the truest Proportions, and the greatest Grace; The Colouring in both seems equal, and indeed, in both is admirable. *Homer* had more Fire and Rapture, *Virgil* more Light and Sweetness; or at least the *Poetical Fire* was more raging in *One*, but clearer in the *Other*; Which makes the first more amazing, and the Latter more agreeable. The *Oare* was richer in *one*, but in *t'other* more refined, and better allay'd, to make up excellent Work. Upon the whole, says *Temple*, I think it must be confess'd, that *Homer* was of the two, and, perhaps, of all others, the Vastest, the Sublimest, and the most *Wonderful Genius*; and that he has been generally so esteem'd, there cannot be a greater Testimony given, than what has been by some observ'd, that not only the greatest Masters have found, in his Works, the best and truest Principles of all their Sciences or Arts; but that the noblest Nations have derived from them the Original of their several Races, though it be hardly yet agreed, whether his Story be true, or Fiction. In short, says *Temple*, These Two Immortal Poets, must be allowed to have so much Excelled in their kinds, as to have exceeded all Comparison, to have even extinguish'd Emulation, and in a manner confined *true Poetry*, not only to their Two Languages, but to their very Persons. And I am apt to believe, (says *Temple*) so much of the
true

96 Characters and Censures.

true Genius of Poetry in General, and of its Elevation in these two Particulars, that I know not, whether of all the Numbers of Mankind, that live within the compass of a Thousand Years; for one Man that is born Capable of making such a Poet as Homer or Virgil, there may not be a Thousand born Capable of making as great Generals of Armies, or Ministers of State, as any the most Renowned in Story. **Temple's Essay of Poetry, pag. 18, 19, 20.**

*Just as a Changeling seems below the rest
Of Men, or rather is a Two-legg'd Beast ;
So these * Gigantick Souls amaz'd we find
As much above the rest of Humane Kind.
Nature's whole strength united! Endless Fame,
And Universal Shouts attend their Name.
Read Homer once, and you can read no more,
For all things else appear so dull and poor,
Verse will seem Prose ; yet often on him look,
And you will hardly need another Book.*

Mulgrave. Essay on Poetry.

*'Tis said, that Homer, Matchless in his Art,
Stole Venus Girdle, to ingage the Heart :
His Works indeed Vast Treasures do unfold,
And whatsoe'er he touches, turns to Gold :
All in his hands new beauty does acquire ;
He always pleases, and can never tire.
A happy warmth he every where may boast ;
Nor is he in too long Digressions lost :
His Verses without Rule a Method find,
And of themselves appear in Order joyn'd :
All without trouble answers his intent ;
Each Syllable is tending to th' Event.*

* Homer
and
Virgil.

Let

Let his Example your indeavours raise :
To Love his Writings, is a kind of Praise.

Boileau's Art of Poetry, Englished by Sir
William Soame.

Monsieur Bayle, in his first Tome of *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, 1684. pag. 87. quotes the Learned Isaac Casaubon, as Author of this Sentence, *Qui Homerum Conterant, vix illis optari quidquam pejus potest, quam ut fatuitate sua fruantur*, That *Whoever they are that despise Homer, there cannot be a greater Curse wish'd them, than to be abandoned to their own Folly.*

The Criticks, in the *Journal des Scavans*, Tome 12. pag. 319, 320. tell us, That either those, who in this Age find so many Faults in the Works of *Homer*, must be Men of a very ill Taste, or else that the *Ancients* were much mistaken, when esteeming him the *Prince of Poets*, they Erected Statues, Built Temples, Rais'd Altars, Offer'd Sacrifice, and also caus'd Medals to be Coin'd, in Honour of him; nay, and that even among the *Christians* there was a sort of *Hereticks*, call'd the *Carpocratians*, who us'd to Adore, and Offer Incense at his Shrine.

Julius Scaliger, in his Fifth Book *De Poeticâ*, chap. 2. admiring the extraordinary great Wit of *Homer*, says, There appears so much *Art* in all that he has Writ, that he seems rather to have been the First *Inventer*, than the *Improver* of it; and therefore, without any absurdity it may be said, That it is rather the *Idea of Nature*, than *Art*, that appears in *Homer*.

But afterwards he falls very severely upon *Homer*, saying, That his *Narrations* were tedious; his Thoughts and Notions were too Effeminate, and Vulgar; and that they had so little of Sense, or Force in them, that they would

scarce affect his Scullion. And, to conclude, he says, That Homer's Epithets are generally cold, flat, childish, and unseasonable.

Borrichius, in his *Dissert. Acad. De Poetis*, pag. 9. observes, There are Two Faults, which the more knowing sort of Men use to find in Homer; The one, that he was not judicious enough in the choice of his Epithets, as also that he was too full of his Digressions, and insipid Dialogues; The other, that he did often Invent and Devise filthy and abominable stories concerning the Gods: The first of these Crimes, says Borrichius, might well enough be excused, because Poetry was then in its Infancy, and not grown yet to perfection; but the second Crime gave great offence, even to the more considerate sort of Heathens. And therefore, hence it was, That Jerom the Philosopher in *Diogenes Laertius*, relates, that Pythagoras, when he was in Hell, saw the Soul of Hesiod fasten'd to a Brass-Pillar, and makeing a most hideous noise; but at the same time Homer's Soul was hanging upon a Tree, encompass'd about with dreadful Serpents; and all this, because they had both of them Writ such Lewd, Scandalous Things, concerning the Divine Nature.

Theophilus Gale, in his Third Book, chap. 1. sect. vi. of *The Court of the Gentiles*, remarks, That Homer had many of his Fictions from some real Scripture Tradition, which he gather'd up whilst he was in Egypt; Which (says Gale) we may safely conjecture, even from his Style, and the Affinity of many of his Expressions with the Scripture Language.

And to the same effect, says Sir Walter Raleigh, in his First Book, the Sixth Chapter, and the Seventh Section, it cannot be doubted (says he) but that Homer, had

had read over all the Books of *Moses*, as by Places stollen thence, almost Word for Word, may appear.

And for the more full Evidence hereof, see *Duport's Gnomologia*, or Parallel betwixt *Homer* and the *Scripture*.

Clemens Alexandrinus, lib. vi. *Stromatum*, affirms, That *Homer* has taken several Verses Word for Word out of *Orpheus de extincto Baccho*.

Johannes Lomeierus, in his Treatise *De Bibliothecis*, cap. iv. makes mention of a *Library* in the Temple of *Vulcan*, at *Memphis*, a City in *Egypt*; Where, as *Naufrates* told the Story, *Homer* happening to find some Books of a certain Woman, called *Phantasia*, and among others the *Iliads* and *Odysses*, which *she* had Wrote, and plac'd in that Temple; *He* very fairly took the Confidence to Publish them for *his own*. But the said *Lomeierus* at the same time assures us, That this Story is utterly false.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus,

A Most Illustrious Latin Lyrick Poet, Born at *Venusium*, a City in *Italy*; not for the Nobility of his Birth, for he is reported the Son but of a mean person, some say a *Salter*; but for that Delicacy of Wit, Purity of Style, and Weight of Judgment, both in his *Lyricks*, and other Writings, which gain'd him the esteem of the Noblest of Favourites, *Mecænas*, and, by his means, of the greatest Prince upon Earth, *Augustus*; by whom he

was advanc'd to a considerable Estate, whereof he made *Augustus* his Heir. He dyed at *Rome* in the 57. Year of his Age, being the Third Year of the 192. Olympiad, six Years before *Christ*.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* I. relates, That the Emperour *Augustus* gave this Character of *Horace*, That he was a very Correct Author.

Nicolaus Heinsius, in his Comment upon *Ovid*, says, That the *Ancients* gave *Horace* the particular Epithet of *Numerosus*, from his being so very exact and accurate in *Numbers*, as his *Lyricks* do sufficiently testifie.

Quintilian, lib. x. cap. I. observes, That *Horace* is the Chief at noting the *Manners* of Men; that among all the *Latin Lyrick Poets*; there is scarce any but *Horace* who is worth the Reading; for that he hath now and then his Flights and Elevation; his Stile is both graceful and agreeable; his Figures and Expressions are bold, but at the same time happy.

Monsieur Blondel, in his Particular Treatise, wherein he draws the Parallel betwixt *Horace* and *Pindar*, remarks, That *Horace* was not inferior to *Pindar*; either in respect of the Copiousness and Sublimity of his Inventions, or the nobleness and boldness of his Expressions; but that *Horace* was more correct and pure in his Style, than *Pindar*.

He further tells us, That *Horace* has a more Universal Genius, and a more General Knowledge than *Pindar*; as also that he is more of a piece, that he has more of Sweetness, and is more agreeable; and, in general, that he has fewer faults than *Pindar*.

And, to conclude, he assures us, There is not to be found among the *Ancients*, any thing which is more proper, for the imprinting on our Minds true Sentiments of Moral Honesty, than the Works of *Horace*.

The

The German Criticks of *Lipstick*, in the *Acta Eruditorum*, Jun. 1684. pag. 262. observe to us, That among the Three Principal *Satyrists* of the *Ancients*, viz *Juvenal*, *Persius*, and *Horace*, this last observ'd the Medium between the Extreams of the other Two; that is to say, between the *Invectives* of *Juvenal*, which by their extent look like a sort of *Declamation*; and the obscure, and too much constrain'd Brevity of *Persius*. And so they conclude, That *Horace* did as well deserve the chief place among the *Satyrists*, as amongst the *Latin Lyrick Poets*.

Borrificius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. De Poetis*, pag. 50. says, That tho' *Horace* himself was not a Man of Chastity, yet that his Style was chast and pure; that in the *Lyricks* none of the *Latin Poets* ever excell'd him, but that in his *Heroick Poems*, as he abounded with wise Precepts and Admonitions, so he often fail'd in Numbers and Cadence. But upon the whole matter, *Borrificius* is of the Opinion, That *Horace* very justly deserves to be reckon'd among the best *Latin Authors*.

Julius Scaliger, in his *Hypercritic.* pag. 867. remarks, That *Horace* is the most exact, and Elaborate of all the *Greek* and *Latin Poets*; that his *Lyricks* have both an Harmonious and Majestick sound: Which excellent qualities if they are not to be found in his other Works, one may plainly see, he had no mind to make use of them; and that therefore it can be no prejudice to his Reputation, since it was rather the effect of his Judgment, than his inability, that he did not use them.

He likewise tells us, pag. 879. That *Horace's Odes* are so full of fancy and beauty, so much purity in the style, so great a Variety and such new Turns in the Figures, that they are not only Proof against the Censure of *Criticks*, but also above the highest *Encomium's*; and

and that they are no less to be admir'd for their sublime Style, than for that sweetness and simplicity, which is inherent in them.

Rapin tells us, That *Horace* in his *Odes* found the Art to joyn all the force and high Flights of *Pindar*, to all the sweetness and delicacy of *Anacreon*, to make himself a new Character, by uniting the perfections of the other Two. For besides that he had a *Wit* naturally pleasant, it was also great, solid, and sublime; he had nobleness in his Conceits, and delicacy in his Thoughts and Sentiments: The parts of his *Odes* that he was willing to finish, are always *Master-pieces*; but (says *Rapin*) it requires a very clear apprehension to discern all his *Wit*; for there are many *Secret Graces*, and hidden Beauties in his Verse, that very few can discover; He also is the only *Latin Author* who writ well in *that Verse* amongst the *Ancients*; and none could ever follow him, his *Genius* went so high. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Aristotle's Treat. of Poesie*, part 2. sect. 30.

Dryden says, That if we take *Horace* in parts, he is chiefly to be consider'd in his Three different *Talents*, as he was a *Critick*, a *Satyrift*, and a *Writer of Odes*. His *Morals* are uniform, and run through all of them; For let his *Dutch Commentators* say what they will, his *Philosophy* was *Epicurean*; and he made use of *Gods* and *Providence*, only to serve a turn in *Poetry*. But (says *Dryden*) since neither his *Criticisms*, (which are the most instructive of any that are written in this Art,) nor his *Satyrs*, (which are incomparably beyond *Juvenal's*, if to laugh and rally, is to be preferr'd to railing and declaiming,) are no part of my present undertaking, I confine my self wholly to his *Odes*: These are also of several sorts; some of them are *Panegyrical*, others *Moral*, the rest *Jovial*, or (if I may so call them) *Bacchanalian*.

Bacchanalian. As difficult as Horace makes it, and as indeed it is, to imitate Pindar, yet in his most elevated flights, and in the sudden changes of his Subject, with almost imperceptible Connexions, that Theban Poet is his Master. But Horace, says Dryden, is of the more bounded Fancy, and confines himself strictly to one sort of Verse, or Stanza in every Ode. That which will distinguish his Style from all other Poets, is the Elegance of his Words, and the Numerousness of his Verse; there is nothing so delicately turn'd in all the Roman Language. There appears (says Dryden) in every part of his Diction, or (to speak English) in all his Expressions, a kind of noble and bold Purity. His Words are chosen with as much exactness as Virgil's; but there seems to be a greater Spirit in them. There is a secret Happiness attends his Choice, which in Petronius is call'd *Curiosa Felicitas*, and which I suppose (says Dryden) he had from the *Feliciter audere* of Horace himself. But the most distinguishing part of all his Character, seems to be his Briskness, his Jolity, and his good Humour: - And those (says Dryden) I have chiefly endeavour'd to Copy; his other Excellencies, I confess, are above my Imitation. *Dryd. Pref. to Sylvæ: Or, the 2d Part of Poetical Miscellanies.*

A late Anonymous German Author in his *Bibliograph. Curios. Histor. Philologic.* pag. 46. remarks, That Horace's Book, *De Arte Poeticâ*, which really is no more than an Epistle to the Two Piso's, is an Excellent Piece of Criticism, as well as his other Epistles and Satyrs; but yet, that it is not a Work so well finish'd, and perfect-ed, as one might reasonably have expected from the hand of so great a Master.

Gerardus Johannes Vossius, in his *De Arte Poeticâ*, cap. 14. sect. 1. says, That the Oeconomy which Horace hath observ'd

observ'd in his *De Arte Poeticâ* is not very regular, nor exact; that all that he minded, was to heap together a great many Rules and Precepts, without regarding their Order, or Method.

Rapin, in the *Advertisement* before his *Reflexions* on Aristotle's Treatise of *Poësie*, observes to us, that Horace's Piece *De Arte Poeticâ*, is no more than an Interpretation of Aristotle's Treatise of *Poësie*; and that Horace was the first who propos'd this great Model to the Romans.

And in another place Rapin tells us, That Horace, who was the first Interpreter of Aristotle, in his Book *De Arte Poeticâ*, has observ'd as little Method as Aristotle did; because (perhaps) it was writ in an *Epistle*, whose Character ought to be free, and without constraint. *Rap. Reflex &c. part 1. sect. xvii.*

Benjamin Johnson.

THIS Renowned Poet was born in the City of Westminster, his Mother living in Harts-Horn-Lane, near Charing Cross, where she Married a Bricklayer for her Second Husband. But tho' he sprang from mean Parents, yet his admirable Parts have made him more famous, than those of a more conspicuous Extraction. Nor do I think it any diminution to him, That he was Son-in-Law to a Bricklayer, and work'd at that Trade; since if we take a survey of the Records of Antiquity, we shall find the greatest Poets of the meanest Birth, and most liable to the Inconveniencies of Life. Witness Homer,

Homer, who begg'd from door to door ; *Euripides*, traded in Herbs with his Mother ; *Plautus* was forc'd to serve a Baker ; *Nævius* was a Captain's Man ; *Terence* was a Slave to the generous *Lucan* ; *Virgil*, was the Son of a Basket-Maker : And yet these thought the obscurity of their Extraction no diminution to their Worth ; Nor will any Man of Sense reflect on *Ben. Johnson* on this account, if he seriously call to mind that saying of *Juvenal* in his Eighth Satyr :

— *Nobilitas sola est, atque unica Virtus.*

He was first bred at a Private School, in St. Martin's Church, then plac'd at *Westminster*, under the famous Mr. *Cambden*, (to whom in gratitude he dedicated his fourteenth *Epizram*) afterwards he was sent to St. John's Colledge in *Cambridge* ; from thence he remov'd to *Oxford*, and was enter'd of *Christ-Church Colledge* ; where in the Year 1619. (as Mr. *Wood* says) he took his Master of Arts Degree : Tho' Dr. *Fuller* says, He continued there but few Weeks, for want of Maintenance, being fain to return to the Trade of his Father-in-Law ; where he assisted in the New Building of *Lincolne's Inn*, with a Trowel in his Hand, and a Book in his Pocket. But this *English Maro*, was not long before he found a *Mæcenas* and a *Varus*, to free him from so slavish an Employment, and furnish him with Means to enjoy his *Muse at liberty*, in private. 'Twas then that he writ his Excellent Plays, and grew into Reputation with the most Eminent of our *Nobility*, and *Gentry*. 'Twas then, that *Carthwright*, *Randolph*, and others of both *Universities*, sought his *Adoption*; and gloried more in his Friendship, and the Title of his *Sons*, than in their own well-deserv'd Characters. Neither did he less love, or

was less belov'd by the Famous Poets of his Time,
Shakespear, Beaumont, and Fletcher.

He was generally esteem'd a Man of a very free Temper, and withal Blunt, and somewhat haughty to those, that were either Rivals in Fame, or Enemies to his Writings, (witness his *Poetaster*, wherein he falls upon *Decker*, and his answer to Dr. *Gill*, who writ against his *Magnetick Lady*,) otherwise of a good sociable Humour, when amongst his Sons and Friends in the *Apollo*.

He has writ Fifty Plays in all, whereof Fifteen are *Comedies*, Three are *Tragedies*, the rest are *Masques* and Entertainments: And besides these, (for he is not wholly Dramatick,) there are his *Underwoods*, *Epigrams*, &c.

Winstanley, in *The Lives of the most Famous English Poets*, says, That *Ben. Johnson* was paramount in the Dramatick part of Poetry, and taught the Stage an exact conformity to the Laws of *Comedians*, being accounted the most Learned, Judicious, and Correct of all the English Poets; and the more to be admir'd for being so, for that neither the height of Natural Parts, for he was no *Shakespear*; nor the Cost of extraordinary Education, but his own proper Industry, and Application to Books, advanc'd him to this perfection.

He likewise tells us, That *Johnson's Plays* were above the Vulgar Capacity, and took not so well at the first Stroke, as at the rebound, when beheld the second time; yea, that they will endure Reading, and that with due Commendation, so long as either Ingenuity or Learning are fashionable in our Nation. And altho' all his Plays may endure the Test, yet in Three of his *Comedies*, namely, *The Fox*, *Alchymist*, and *Silent Woman*, he may be compar'd, in the Judgment of Learned Men, for

for *Decorum*, *Language*, and *Humour*, as well with the Chief of the *Ancient Greek* and *Latin Comedians*, as the Prime of *Modern Italians*, who have been judg'd the best of *Europe* for a happy Vein in *Comedies*; Nor is his *Bartholomew-Fair* much short of them. As for his other *Comedies*, *Staple of News*, *Devil's an Ass*, and the rest, if they be not (says *Winstanley*) so sprightly and vigorous as his *first Pieces*, all that are Old, will, and all that desire to be Old, should excuse him therein; and therefore let the Name of *Ben. Johnson* shield them against whoever shall think fit to be severe in *Censure* against them. The truth is, says *Winstanley*, his *Tragedies*, *Sejanus*, and *Cataline* seem to have in them more of an *Artificial* and *Inflate*, than of a *Pathetical* and naturally *Tragick Height*; yet do they far excel any of the *English ones*, that were writ before him; so that He may be truly said, to be the *first Reformer* of the *English Stage*.

In the rest of his *Poetry*, (for he is not wholly *Dramatick*,) as his *Underwoods*, *Epigrams*, &c. He is (says this *Author*) sometimes bold and strenuous, sometimes *Majisterial*, sometimes lepid and full enough of *Conceit*, and sometimes a *Man* as other *Men* are.

Dryden tells us, That if we look upon *Johnson* while he was *himself*, (for his last Plays were but his *Dotes*,) he thinks him the most Learned and Judicious Writer which any Theatre ever had. He was a most severe Judge of himself as well as others. One cannot say he wanted *Wit*, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his Works you find little to retrench or alter. *Wit* and *Language*, and *Humour* also in some measure we had before him; but something of *Art* was wanting to the *Drama* till he came. He manag'd his Strength to more advantage than any who preceeded

him. You seldom find him making love in any of his Scenes, or endeavouring to move the Passions; his Genius was too sullen and Saturnine to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had perform'd both to such an height. Humour was his proper Sphere, and in that he delighted most to represent Mechanick People. He was deeply Conversant in the *Ancients*, both *Greek* and *Latin*, and he borrow'd boldly from them: There is scarce a *Poet* or *Historian* among the *Roman Authors* of those times whom he has not Translated in *Sejanus* and *Catiline*. But he has done his Robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any Law. He invades Authors like a Monarch, and what would be Theft in other Poets, is only Victory in him. With the Spoils of these Writers he so represents *Old Rome* to us, in its Rites, Ceremonies and Customs, that if one of their Poets had written either of his *Tragedies*, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his *Language*, 'twas that he weav'd it too closely and laboriously, in his *Comedies* especially: Perhaps too, he did a little too much *Romanize* our Tongue, leaving the Words which he Translated almost as much *Latin* as he found them: Wherein tho' he learnedly followed their *Language*, he did not enough comply with the Idiom of Ours. If (says Dryden) I would compare him with Shakespear, I must acknowledge him the more correct Poet, but Shakespear the greater Wit. Shakespear was the Homer, or Father of our Dramatick Poets; Johnson was the Virgil, the pattern of Elaborate Writing; I admire him, says Dryden, but I love Shakespear. To conclude, as he has given us the most Correct Plays, so in the precepts which he has laid down in his Discoveries, We have as many and profitable Rules for perfecting the Stage, as any

any wherewith the French can furnish us. **Dryd.** *Eſſay of Dramatick Poesie*, pag. 34, 35.

Dryden, in his Postscript to *Granada*, calls Ben Johnson, *The moſt Judicious of Poets and Inimitable Writer*, yet, he says, his Excellency lay in the low Characters of Vice, and Folly. When at any time (says he) Ben. aim'd at Wit in the ſtrickeſter ſeſſe, that is sharpneſs of Conceit, he was forcd to borrow from the *Ancients*, (as to my knowleſe he did very muſh from *Plautus*:) Or When he truſted himſelf alone, oſten fell into meanness of Expression. Nay, he was not free from the loweſt and moſt groveling kind of *Wit*, which we call *Clenches*: Of which every *Man in his Humour* is infinitely full, and which is worse, the Wittieſt Persons in the *Drama* ſpeak them.

Dryden, in another place, allows, That Ben. Johnson is to be admir'd for many Excellencies; and can be tax'd with fewer failings, than any English Poet. I know, says Dryden, I have been accus'd as an Enemy of his Writings; but without any other Reason, than that I do not admire him blindly, and without looking into his Imperfections. For why ſhould he only be exempted from those frailties, from which Homer and Virgil are not free? Or, why ſhould there be any *Ipſe dixit* in our Poetry, any more than there is in our Philosophy. I admire and applaud him (says Dryden) where I ought: Those who do more, do but value themſelves in their admiration of him; and by telling you they extol Ben. Johnson's way, would inſinuate to you, that they can practise it. For my part, says Dryden, I declare that I want Judgment to imitate him: And ſhould think it a great impudence in my ſelf to attempt it. To make Men appear pleasanly ridiculous on the Stage, was, as I have ſaid, his Talent: And in this he needed not the *Acumen of Wit*, but that of *Judgment*.

For

For the Characters and Representations of Folly are only the effects of Observation; and Observation is an effect of Judgment. Some Ingenious Men, for whom (says Dryden) I have a particular esteem, have thought I have much injur'd Ben. Johnson, when I have not allow'd his *Wit* to be extraordinary: But they confound the Notion of what is *Witty*, with what is *pleasant*. That Ben Johnson's Plays were *pleasant*, he must want reason who denies: But that *pleasantness* (says Dryden) was not properly *Wit*, or the sharpness of Conceit; but the natural imitation of Folly: Which I confess to be excellent in its Kind, but not to be of that kind which they pretend. Yet if we will believe Quintilian, in his Chapter *De Movendo Risu*, he gives his Opinion of *Both* in these following Words, *Stulta reprehendere facillimum est; nam per se sunt ridicula: & à derisu non procul abest risus: Sed rem Urbanam facit aliqua ex nobis adjectio.* Dryd. Pref. to the Mock-Astrologer.

Shadwell, in his Dedication before the *Vertuoso*, says, That Johnson was incomparably the best Dramatick Poet that ever was, or, he believes, ever will be; and that he had rather be Author of one Scene in his best *Comedies*, than of any Play this Age has produc'd.

Notwithstanding the general Vogue of Ben. Johnson, yet we finde a most severe *Satyr* against his *Magnetick Lady*, Writ by Dr. Gill, Master of Pauls School, or at least his Son: Part of which I shall take the pains to Transcribe:

*But to advise thee Ben, in this strict Age,
A Brick-hill's better for thee than a Stage.
Thou better know'st a Ground-sill for to lay,
Than lay the Plot, or Ground-work of a Play,*

And

*And better can't direct to Cap a Chimney,
Than to converse with Clio, or Polyhimny.*

*Fall then to work in thy Old Age again,
Take up thy Trug and Trowel, gentle Ben,
Let Plays alone; or if thou needs will Write,
And thrust thy feeble Muse into the Light;
Let Lowen cease, and Taylor scorn to touch
The loathed Stage, for thou hast made it such.*

Ben. Johnson's Answer to the said Verses.

*Shall the prosperity of a Pardon still
Secure thy railing Rhymes, Infamous Gill,
At Libelling? Shall no Star-Chamber Peers,
Pillory, nor Whip, nor want of Ears,
All which thou hast incur'd deservedly:
Nor degradation from the Ministry,
To be the Denis of thy Father's School,
Keep in thy bawling Wit, thou bawling Fool.
Thinking to stir me, thou hast lost thy end,
I'll Laugh at thee poor wretched Tike, go send
Thy Blotant Muse abroad, and teach it rather
A Tune to drown the Ballads of thy Father:
For thou hast nought to cure his Fame,
But Tune and Noise the Echo of his Shame.
A Rogue by Statute, censur'd to be Whipt,
Cropt, branded, slipt, neck-stockt; go, you are stript.*

The haughty Humour of *Johnson* was blam'd, and
Carpt at by several, but by none more Ingeniously, than
by Sir John Suckling, who arraign'd him at the Sessions of
Poets in this manner:

The

*The first that broke silence was good Old Ben,
Prepar'd before with Canary Wine ;
And he told them plainly that he deserv'd the Bays,
For his were call'd Works, where others were but Plays ;
And,*

*Bid them remember how he had purg'd the Stage
Of Errors that had lasted many an Age :
And he hop'd they did not think, the Silent Woman,
The Fox, and the Alchymist, out done by no Man.*

*Apollo stopt him there, and bid him not go on,
'Twas Merit, he said, and not Presumption
Must carry't ; at which Ben. turn'd about,
And in great choller offer'd to go out :*

But,

*Those that were there, thought it not fit
To discontent so Ancient a Wit ;
And therefore Apollo call'd him back agen,
And made him mine Host of his own New-Inn.*

*Ben. Johnson died Anno Dom. 1637. in the Sixty Third
Year of his Age, and was buried in St. Peters Church
in Westminster, on the West-side near the Belfry ; hav-
ing only a plain Stone over his Grave, with this Inscript-
tion,*

O Rare BEN. JOHNSON.

Decius

Decius Junius Juvenalis,

A Most Elegant Latin Satyrist, (as appears by his Sixteen Satyrs, which are Extant,) born at Aquinam in the Kingdom of Naples; He flourish'd in the time of the Emperour Domitian; who for Reflecting upon Paris, a Comedian and Favourite, was in the Eightieth Year of his Age sent Captain of a Company into Egypt, whence he is call'd by Sidonius Apollinaris, *I-rati Histriionis Exul.*

Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. 28. *Histor.* says, That in his time *Juvenal* was so much in Vogue, that even some who did detest Learning, did notwithstanding in their most profound retiredness, diligently employ themselves in Reading his Works.

To omit *Suidas*, and some others of the *Ancients*, which mention him, *Porphyrio* the Commentator on *Horace*, confesses that *Horace* had excell'd, had not *Juvenal* writ.

Liphius, Cent. II. *Miscell. Epist.* 62. reckons *Juvenal* amongst the most useful sort of Writers.

And again, lib. iv. *Epistolic. Quæstion. Epist.* 15. *Liphius* tells us, That never any *Satyrist* excell'd *Juvenal* in correcting the ill Manners of Men.

Conradus Ritteribusius, lib. I. *Lect. Sacr. cap. x.* says, That *Juvenal* is so full of his Divine, Grave Sentences, that he may very properly be call'd, *The Prophet of the Latin Poets.*

Joseph Scaliger, in his *Scaligerana* I. pag. 95. assures us, That *Juvenal* is an Excellent Poet, and that he has a great many fine Things; that his *Satyr*s are truly

Q

Tragical;

Tragical; but I cannot but wonder, says *Scaliger*, why he should say, that he wrote in the Style of *Lucilius*, since never any thing was more unlike either that, or *Horace's* Style.

Farnaby, in the *Epistle Dedicatory* to the *Prince of Wales*, before his Translation of *Juvenal*, says, That many preferr'd *Juvenal's Satyrs* before all the *Morals* of *Aristotle*, nay, and that they thought them equal to those of *Seneca*, and *Epicetus*.

He likewise informs us, There are several *Criticks*, who give the precedence to *Juvenal* before *Horace*; esteeming the latter but as a slight, superficial *Satyrift*, who only laught from the teeth outwards; whereas *Juvenal* bit to the very bone, and did not often suffer his Prey to escape without strangling, and being put to Death.

Sir *Robert Stapleton*, in the Preface to his *Translation of Juvenal*, remarks, That this Author is commended by Learned Men for the best *Satyrift*; whence he is styled, *That Censor Morum Liberrimus*. He is also a rare *Poet*, as is testified by his *Verse*, flowing like a River, when the Wind breaths gently, smooth near the Banks, strong in the Current. He was a true *Philosopher*, who with inimitable sweetness of Language, and Majesty of Sentences, sets before our Eyes (says *Stapleton*) the loveliness of *Vertue*, and the deformity of *Vice*.

Julius Scaliger, lib. 6. *De Poeticâ*, calls *Horace* a *Scoffer*, his Speech *Vulgar*, his *Verse* negligent, only his *Latin* pure. But *Juvenal*, says he, *ardet, instat, aperte jugulat*; his Purity is *Roman*, his Composure happy, his *Verse* better, his Sentences sharper, his Phrase more open, and his *Satyr* more accurate. *Horace*, says he, did not more exceed *Lucilius*, than *Juvenal Horace*; whether we respect the variety of Arguments, the dexterity

dexterity of Handling, the plenty of Invention, the frequency of Sentences, the sharpness of Reprehension, as also his Raillery, and good Manners. pag. 838, and 872.

Barten Holyday, in the Pref. to his Translation of *Juvenal*, observes, That in the same Arguments *Juvenal* never came short of *Horace*, but often out-went him; that *Juvenal's* Eighth Satyr of True Nobility, is far more excellent, than, of the same Argument, *Horace's* Sixth. Compare, says he, *Juvenal's* Tenth with *Horace's* First, of *The Desires of Men*, (let *Julius Scaliger* speak the Close in his own Words,) *Sanè ille tibi Juvenalis Poeta videbitur, hic Horatius jejunæ cuiuspam Theseos tenuis tentator*; surely thou wilt acknowledge *Juvenal* to be a Poet, but *Horace* to be some poor Theme-Maker. *Lipsius* readily approves of this Opinion, saying of *Scaliger*, *Ille, me judice, inter multa certi & elegantis judicii, nihil verius protulit*; preferring *Juvenal* before *Horace*, for his Ardor, his Loftiness, and his Freedom. And for my own part, says *Holyday*, tho' I willingly admire the happiness of *Horace* in his *Lyricks*, yet I cannot but think he very much untun'd himself in his fall from the *Ode* to the *Satyr*. Besides, *Juvenal's* Change of the Ancient *Satyr*, was, methinks, not only a *Change*, but a *Perfection*. For, says *Holyday*, what is the End of *Satyr*, but to *Reform*? Whereas a perpetual *Grin* does rather *Anger* than *Mend*. Wherefore the *Old Satyr* and the *New*, and so *Horace* and *Juvenal*, may seem to differ as the *Jester* and the *Orator*, the Face of an *Ape* and of a *Man*, or as the *Fiddle* and *Thunder*.

Juvenal, says *Dryden*, is of a more Vigorous and Masculine Wit, than *Horace*; he gives me as much pleasure as I can bear: He fully satisfies my Expectation, he treats his Subject home: His Spleen is rais'd, and he

raises mine: I have the Pleasure of Concernment in all he says; He drives his Reader along with him; and when he is (says *Dryden*) at the end of his way, I willingly stop with him: If he went another Stage, it wou'd be too far, it would make a Journey of a Progress, and turn Delight into Fatigue. When he gives over, 'tis a sign the Subject is exhausted; and the Wit of Man can carry it no farther. If a Fault can be justly found in him, 'tis (says *Dryden*) that he is sometimes too luxuriant, too redundant; says more than he needs, but never more than pleases. Add to this, that his Thoughts are as just as those of *Horace*, and much more Elevated. His Expressions are Sonorous, and more Noble; his Verse more Numerous, and his Words are suitable to his Thoughts; sublime and lofty. All these contribute to the Pleasure of the Reader, and the greater the Soul of him who Reads, his Transports are the greater. *Horace*, says *Dryden*, is always on the *Amble*, *Juvenal* on the *Gallop*: But his way is perpetually on Carpet-Ground. He goes with more Impetuosity than *Horace*; but as securely; and the swiftness adds a more lively agitation to the Spirits.—The Sauce of *Juvenal* is more poignant to create in us an Appetite of Reading him. The Meat of *Horace* is more nourishing; but the Cookery of *Juvenal* more exquisite; so that, granting *Horace* to be the more general *Philosopher*; we cannot deny, that *Juvenal* was the greater Poet, I mean in *Satyr*. His Thoughts, says *Dryden*, are sharper, his Indignation against Vice is more vehement; his Spirit has more of the Commonwealth Genius; he treats *Tyranny*, and all the Vices attending it, as they deserve, with the utmost rigour: And consequently, a Noble Soul is better pleas'd with a zealous Vindicator of *Roman liberty*;

ty; than with a Temporizing Poet, a well Manner'd Court Slave, and a Man who is often afraid of laughing in the right place: Who is ever decent, because he is naturally servile. After all, says Dryden, *Horace* had the disadvantage of the Times in which he liv'd; they were better for the *Man*, but worse for the *Satyrift*. 'Tis generally said, that those Enormous Vices, which were practis'd under the Reign of *Domitian*, were unknown in the time of *Augustus Cæsar*. That therefore *Juvenal* had a larger Field, than *Horace*. *Dryd.* Dedic. before the Translat. of *Juvenal*, pag. 37, 38, 39.

Rapin observes, That the *Delicacy* which properly gives the relish to *Satyr*, was heretofore the Character of *Horace*, for that it was only by the way of *Fest* and Merriment that he exercis'd his *Censure*. For he knew full well, that the sporting of Wit, hath more effect than the strongest Reasons, and the most sententious Discourse, to render *Vice* *ridiculous*. In which *Juvenal*, says *Rapin*, with all his seriousness, has so much ado to succeed. For indeed that violent manner of Declamation, which throughout he makes use of, has, most commonly, as *Rapin* remarks, but very little Effect, he scarce perswades at all; because he is always in *choler*, and never speaks in *Cold Blood*. 'Tis true, says *Rapin*, he has some *Common Places* of *Morality*, that may serve to dazzle the weaker sort of Apprehensions: But with all his strong Expressions, *energetick* Terms, and great Flashes of Eloquence, he makes little impression; because he has nothing that is *delicate*, or that is *natural*. It is not a true Zeal, as *Rapin* observes, that makes *Juvenal* talk against the misdemeanors of that Age, 'tis meerly a Spirit of Vanity and Ostentation. *Rap.* *Reflex.* &c. part 2. sect. 28.

Lubin's Comments upon *Jurena* and *Persius*, Printed
Hanovæ, 1603. are Inserted in the *Index Expurgatorius*,
Published at *Madrid*, Anno Dom. 1667.

Marcus Annæus Lucanus,

A Famous Poet, born at *Corduba*, a City in *Spain*, in the 37th. or, as others say, the 39th. Year of *Christ*. He was the Son of *Marcus Annæus Mella*, of *Corduba*, a *Roman Knight*; and Nephew to *Lucius Annæus Seneca*, the Philosopher. He was taken in the *Pijonian Conspiracy*, and put to Death by *Nero*, in the 26th. Year of his Age.

He Wrote the *History of the Civil Wars between Cæsar and Pompey*, in *Hexameter Verse*; the Poem is Entituled *Pharsalia*, wherein he is said, to have been assisted by his Wife *Polla Argentaria*.

There have been but few more expos'd to the Censure of *Criticks*, than this our Author. Some making him to be an Excellent Poet; Others an indifferent *Historian*; Some a furious *Orator*; and Others a *Philosopher*, a *Mathematician*, and a *Divine*.

Quintilian, lib. x. cap. i. observes, That *Lucan* has a great deal of Heat and Fire; and that he is very remarkable for his Sentences; but, says he, to speak my mind freely, he is rather to be number'd amongst *Orators* than *Poets*.

Servius, in his Comment upon *Virgil's First Book of his Aeneids*, Verse 281. is also of the Opinion, that *Lucan* did

did not deserve to be reckon'd among the Poets, because he seems to have Writ rather a *History* than a *Poem*.

And *Johannes Sarisberiensis*, lib. 2. *Policratici*, cap. xix. calls *Lucan* a most learned Poet; if, says he, it be proper to call him a Poet, who, by his truly Relating Matters of Fact, appears to be more of the *Historian*.

But we find *Martial* took *Lucan* to be not only a Poet, but a very good one too; according to that *Epigram* of his, lib. 14. Epig. 194.

*Sunt Quidam, qui me dicunt non esse Poetam:
Sed qui me vendit, Bibliopola, putat.*

And *Julius Scaliger*, lib. 1. *Poetices*, cap. 11. says, It is beyond all dispute, that *Lucan* was a Poet; and that the Grammarians do but trifle, (as they commonly do) when they object, and say, That he wrote not a *Poem* but a *History*.

Nicolaus Clemangius, Epist. v. tells us, That *Lucan* gave an excellent Description of the Civil Wars; and that he was very well skill'd both in *Astronomy* and *Philosophy*.

Philippus Rubenicus, lib. 2. *Electorum*, cap. 5. says, He Loves *Lucan* for having so great a Soul; who, though he liv'd in times of Slavery and Tyranny, yet scorn'd to shew any thing that was either Mean, or Servile.

Casper Barthius, lib. 53. *Adversar. cap. 6.* informs us, That *Lucan* is a Poet of a great Genius, of extraordinary Learning, and of a true Heroick Character; who, from the very time he liv'd, has always been esteem'd a most Considerable Author, especially among Philosophers, by Reason of his gravity, his force, his acuteness, and his weighty Sentences, which shine, and are transparent through

through the whole Work ; so that he has scarce ever had his equal in that Kind.

But notwithstanding *Barthius* has given this high Character of *Lucan*, yet in another place, viz. lib. 60. *Advers.* cap. v. he shews us, That his good Qualities have been ballanc'd by his great imperfections: Thus, he says, *Lucan* was a mortal Enemy to *Cæsar*, and his Family ; and that under pretence of speaking for *Liberty*, he had no other design, than to establish the Passion and Ambition of some few particular Persons of his Time, who had a mind to get the Government solely into their own hands ; or, since they could not bear any longer with their Lawful Prince, were rather disposed to submit themselves to any other whatsoever, than to *Cæsar*; who, by overthrowing the Commonwealth, had taken away all their Liberties, only to invest himself with an Absolute, *Despotick* Power.

He also further declares, That *Lucan* was a rash, giddy-headed Young Fellow, and that he Writ without any thing of Judgement ; that he knew not how to manage the Characters of those, whom he represented ; but that he generally gave them his own vain, idle, and furious Character.

But this great Freedom us'd by *Lucan*, and which *Barthius* takes to be the effect of his want of Judgement, the Learned *Daniel Heinius*, in his Book *De laude Afini*, pag. 86, 87. interprets quite otherwise, for he supposes, and believes, it proceeded from a true *Roman Spirit*, and that it had no other cause, but his own Noble and Generous Temper.

Monsieur *Godeau*, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, and towards the end of the *First Century*, says, That *Lucan* had without doubt a great *Genius*, and a high and lofty Spirit, as particularly appears in his *Descriptions*; but that

that he had the ordinary Vice of Young Men, which is, not to know how to govern himself.

He also adds, That as some have too great an esteem for him, so Others blame him more than he deserves; for that as he has his Vices, so it cannot be deny'd, but he has his Vertues too.

Julius Scaliger, lib. 6. De Poetica, pag. 844. remarks, That there are some, who have the confidence to compare *Lucan* with *Virgil*; but these, says he, instead of Magnifying *Lucan*, do but expose themselves.

We confess, says *Scaliger*, That *Lucan* was one of a vast Genius; but at the same time we must acknowledge that he would often go beyond the bounds of Poetry; that he had an ungovernable Temper, and would now and then sally out most extravagantly; and to conclude, that he had too much heat and fire in him, wanting that admirable and Divine Temper, which none ever had but *Virgil* only. And therefore, says *Scaliger*, though I may be thought to use too great a freedom, *Lucan* rather seems to Bark than Sing, in my Opinion.

And in another place of the same Book, viz. pag. 717. *Scaliger* observes, That *Lucan* was too much embarras'd, and confus'd in his Thoughts, and that he was often running from one Extream to another.

Lilius Gyraldus, in his fourth Dialogue, *De Poetis Antiquis*, affirms the very same thing of *Lucan*, that *M. Tullius* did of the *Corduban Poets* of his time, who, as he thought, had somewhat in them, that was extreamly odd and uncouth. And therefore, as *Gyraldus* observes, One very ingeniously compar'd *Lucan*, to a Horse that was not broke, which would ever and anon be running in the midst of some Meadow, or Field, leaping, and

kicking up his heels, but without any manner of Order, or Art.

Others, says *Gyraldus*, compar'd him to a Brisk, Active Souldier, who would fling his dart with a vast deal of strength, though at the same time, he ne'er consider'd to take any aim.

Joseph Scaliger, in his first Book, *Epist. 3.* says, That if one looks narrowly into *Lucan*, he will find him to be a Man of no skill in *Astronomy*; and that he was a light, trifling, vain-glorious young Man.

Borrichius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. de Poetis*, pag. 58. remarks, That *Lucan's Pharsalia*, is of a Masculine Style, too much set out with Sentences, and Political Instructions, but that now and then it was somewhat rough, and uneven; nay, and sometimes haughty, and affected. *Borrichius* can by no means approve of *Scaliger's* Censure, viz. That *Lucan* seems rather to *Bark* than *Sing*; but is of Opinion, That had he not been cut off so soon, he would most certainly have polish'd this new Work of his.

Petronius (says *Rapin*, in his *Advertisement* before his *Reflexions on Poesie*) is disgusted with the Stile of *Seneca* and *Lucan*, which to him seem'd affected, and contrary to the Principles of *Aristotle*. 'Tis at them he levels with those glances, that slip from him against the *Poetasters*, and false *Declamators*.

Philippus Brietius, in his Second Book, *De Poetis Latinis*, tells us, That *Lucan* affected to speak nothing, but what was very great, and extraordinary; and hence it is, that his Style is so very lofty, irregular, and obscure.

He also advises *Masters* not to suffer their *Scholars* to read *Lucan*; for that, in his Opinion, never any Poet had so dangerously corrupted *Poetry*.

Rapin

Rapin says, That *Lucan* often in his *Pharsalia* grows flat for want of Wit. *Rap.* Reflex. on *Arist.* of *Poesie*, part 1. sect. 2.

He also observes, That the *Episodes* of *Lucan*, who makes long *Scholaſtick* Dissertations, and Disputes meerly *Speculative*, on things that fall in his way, shew much of Constraint and affectation. *Ibid.* part 2. sect. 8.

And, to conclude, he tells us, That *Lucan* is great and sublime, but as little Judgment. *Ibid.* sect. 15.

Dryden remarks, That *Lucan* follow'd too much the truth of History; crowded Sentences together; was too full of Points; and too often offer'd at somewhat which had more of the Sting of an *Epigram*, than of the dignity and state of an *Heroick Poem*. *Lucan*, says Dryden, us'd not much the help of his *Heathen Deities*: There was neither the Ministry of the Gods, nor the precipitation of the Soul, nor the fury of a Prophet, in his *Pharsalia*: He treats you more like a *Philosopher*, than a *Poet*: and instructs you in *Verse*, with what he had been taught by his Uncle *Seneca* in *Prose*. In one Word, says Dryden, he walks soberly a foot, when he might fly: Yet *Lucan* is not always this Religious Historian. The Oracle of *Appius*, and the Witchcraft of *Eriætho* will somewhat atone for him, who was, indeed, bound up by an ill chosen and known Argument, to follow Truth with great Exactness. *Dryd.* Essay of *Heroick Plays*.

Dryden, also in his *Apology* for *Heroick Poetry*, observes; That *Lucan* and *Statius* were Men of an unbounded Imagination, but that they often wanted the Poize of Judgment.

And in his *Dedication* before *Juvenal*, he says, That *Lucan* is wanting both in *Design* and *Subject*, and is besides too full of Heat, and Affectation, pag. viii.

Caius Lucilius,

A Roman Poet, of the Equestrian Order, the first that writ Satyrs in Latin, the great Uncle of Pompey, born at Aurunca, a Town in Italy. He was a Soldier under Scipio Africanus, when he besieg'd Numantia in Spain; He died at Naples, in the Forty Sixth Year of his Age.

That *Lucilius* was the first who writ *Satyr* amongst the Romans, appears by these following Verses of *Bolleau*, in his *Art of Poetry*, thus render'd into English:

Lucilius was the Man who, bravely bold,
To Roman Vices did this Mirror hold,
Protected humble Goodness from reproach,
Show'd Worth on Foot and Rascals in the Coach:
Horace his pleasing Wit to this did add,
And none uncensur'd could be Fool, or Mad;
Unhappy was that Wretch, whose name might be
Squar'd to the Rules of their Sharp Poetry.

Bolleau of *Satyr*, in his *Art of Poetry*.

Horace, lib. i. Satyr iv. says, That *Lucilius* design'd to imitate the Ancient Greek Comedians, who reflected upon Persons nakedly, without any Art or Disguise; and that among others he had follow'd *Eupolis*, *Cratinus*, and *Aristophanes*, not making any other alteration, than changing the Feet, and Measure of their Verse. He adds, that *Lucilius* is very pleasant and agreeable, and one of a very good Taste; but that his Verse was rough, and wanted the file. He also tells us, that *Lucilius*

cilius would commonly make two Hundred Verses in an hours time, standing all the while upon one Leg, which was a thing very extraordinary ; but that his Verses had neither force, nor purity. To conclude, he says, that *Lucilius* was a Man full of Words, and that he could not endure to take much pains.

But notwithstanding this Character of *Horace*, we see *Quintilian*, lib. x. cap. 1. tells us, That *Lucilius* was the first amongst the *Romans*, who had got any Reputation for writing *Satyr*; and that he was arriv'd to so great Credit, and such a Fame, That there are Many, who prefer him before all other Poets in general. But, says *Quintilian*, I differ as much from *Them*, as I do from *Horace*, who compares *Lucilius* to a River, which carries with it a great deal of Filth and Mud, but yet has somewhat that is good in it. For says *Quintilian*, there is in *Lucilius* Wonderful Learning, great Freedom, and abundance of Wit.

Tully calls *Lucilius*, The chief of the *Latin Satyrist*s, a Learned Man, and a very Ingenious Person, of a Sharp Wit, one of an Excellent Life himself, and a Sting-ing Accuser of the Villanies of Others.

Juvenal, in his first *Satyr* observes, That *Lucilius* us'd to write with so much sharpness and freedom, that all the lewd, dissolute Persons of those Times, were afraid of him : Which *Dryden* has thus translated into English Verse :

But when *Lucilius* brandishes his Pen,
And flashes in the face of Guilty Men,
A cold Sweat stands in drops on ev'ry part ;
And Rage succeeds to Tears, Revenge to Smart.

126 Characters and Censures.

Aulus Gellius, lib. 18. cap. v. *Noctium Atticarum*, says, That *Lucilius* was incomparably well skill'd in the *Latin Tongue*.

Turnebus, in the nineteenth Book of his *Adversaria*, cap. vi. remarks, That *Lucilius* in his *Satyrs*, did sometimes fall into the *Iambick*.

And in the 28th Book, cap. ix. *Turnebus* observes to us, That though *Lucilius*'s Verses are not to be compar'd to those of other Poets; yet they have somewhat in them, which is both pleasant and entertaining.

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, There were some who blam'd *Lucilius*, for mixing *Greek* with his *Latin*, just as *Pytholeon Rhodius* did in his *Epigrams*, who, for that reason, was laugh'd at by *Horace*. But, says *Gyraldus*, I am sure *Catullus* (and I could name others) did the same thing.

Gerardus Johannes Vossius, lib. v. *Institutionum Oratoriarum*, pag. 315. says, That of all the *Latin Poets*, *Lucilius* was observ'd to have made the greatest use of the Figure *Tmesis*, according to that *Distich* of *Ausonius*:

Resciffo disces componere nomine Versum :
Lucilii vatis sic imitator eris.

Auson. Epist. 5.

Dryden remarks, That tho' *Horace* seems to have made *Lucilius* the first Author of *Satyr* in *Verse*, amongst the *Romans*; He is only thus to be understood, That *Lucilius* had given a more graceful turn to the *Satyr* of *Ennius* and *Pacuvius*; not that he invented a new *Satyr* of his own.—And, as *Dryden* observes, the *Roman Language* was grown more refin'd, and by consequence

sequence more capable of receiving the Grecian Beauties in *Lucilius's Time*; and therefore well might He write better than either *Ennius* or *Pacuvius*. *Dyld.*
Dedic. before *Juvenal*, pag. 25, 26.

Titus Lucretius Carus,

Both a *Latin Poet*, and a *Philosopher*; He was born in the Second Year of the 171. *Olympiad*, 93 Years before *Christ*. According to *Eusebius*, he kill'd himself in the Forty Fourth Year of his Age, his *Mistress* having given him a *Love-Potion*, which made him run mad: Though *Others* tell us, he died in his Twenty Sixth Year, and believe his madness, proceeded from the Cares and Melancholy that opprest him after the Banishment of his beloved *Memmius*.

The only *Remains* this great Wit hath left us, are his Six Books, *De Rerum Natura*; being an exact *System* of the *Epicurean Philosophy*. *Eusebius* affirms, That *Lucretius* wrote these Books in his *Lucid Intervals*, when the Strength of Nature had thrown off all the disturbing Particles, and his Mind (as 'tis observ'd of Mad Men) was Sprightly and Vigorous: Then in a *Poetical Rapture* he could fly with his *Epicurus* beyond the flaming limits of this World, frame and dissolve Seas and Heavens in an instant, and by some unusual Sallys, be the strongest Argument of his own Opinion; for it seems impossible, says *Creech*, that some things which he delivers, should proceed from *Reason* and *Judgment*, or any Cause but *Chance*, and unthinking Fortune.

Ovid

Ovid, speaking of *Lucretius*, gives him a very high Character, presaging that his Verses would continue as long as the World endur'd:-

*Carmina Sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti,
Exitio Terras cum dabit una dies.*

OVID. Amor. lib. I. Eleg. 15.

Although *Cicero*, in his Second Book, *Epist. x.* to his Brother *Quintus*, Confirms his Brothers Opinion, That the Poem of *Lucretius* was not much set forth, or adorn'd with *Wit*; yet at the same time he owns, that *Lucretius* has therein shew'd a great deal of *Art*.

Julius Scaliger, in his Comment upon Aristotle's *Historia Animalium*, cap. 10. calls *Lucretius*, a Divine Person, and an Incomparable Poet.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* I. pag. 104. says, That *Lucretius* is a good Book; that there is not a better Author in the Latin Tongue; and that *Virgil* has taken many things from him.

Gaspar Scippius, in his *De Arte Criticâ*, pag. 93. declares, he is of *Lambinus*'s Opinion, That never any Man spoke Latin to a greater Perfection; and that neither *Tully*, nor *Cæsar*, Wrote with a purer Style than *Lucretius*.

Aulus Gellius, lib. I. cap. 21. *Noct. Attic.* styles *Lucretius*, a Poet that excell'd both in *Wit* and *Eloquence*.

Vossius, in his *De Arte Grammaticâ*, pag. 797. calls *Lucretius*, The best of all the Latin Authors.

Monsieur *Bayle*, in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, Juillet 1685. pag. 812. says, There appears so much Eloquence in the Verse of *Lucretius*, that had he liv'd in the time of *Augustus*, he might very well have disputed the Point with *Virgil*. But, as he observes,

Thirty or Forty Years makes a mighty difference between two Authors. And yet for all that, there are some Criticks, who have plac'd *Lucretius* above all other Latin Authors. But this, says *Bayle*, is too much; 'tis enough to put him in the List of good Authors.

Evelyn, in the *Preface* to his *Translation* of the First Book of *Lucretius*, observes to us, That in this Work of *Lucretius*, Nature her self sits Triumphant, wanting none of her just Equipage and Attendance; whilst our *Carus* hath erected this everlasting *Arch* to her Memory, so full of Ornament and exquisite Workmanship, as nothing of this kind hath ever either approach'd, or exceeded it.

Where the matter he takes in hand is capable of Form and Lustre, he makes it (says *Evelyn*) even to out-shine the Sun it self in splendor: And as he spares no cost to deck and set it forth; so never had Man a more Rich and Luxurious Fancy, more Keen and Sagacious Instruments to square the most stubborn and rude of *Materials*, into that spiring softness you will every where find them dispos'd, in this his Stupendious and well-built *Theatre of Nature*.

Dryden remarks, That if *Lucretius* was not of the best Age of *Roman Poetry*, he was at least of that which preceded it; and he himself refin'd it to that degree of perfection, both in the Language and the Thoughts, that he left an easie Task to *Virgil*; who as he succeeded him in time, so he Copy'd his Excellencies: For the Method of the *Georgicks* is plainly deriv'd from him. *Lucretius* had chosen a Subject naturally crabbed; he therefore adorn'd it with Poetical Descriptions, and Precepts of Morality, in the beginning and ending of his Books. Which you see *Virgil* has imitated with great success, in those Four Books, which (says *Dryden*) in my Opinion, are more perfect in their Kind, than even his Divine

Aeneids. The turn of his Verse he has likewise follow'd, in those Places which *Lucretius* has most Labour'd, and some of his very Lines he has Transplanted into his own Works, without much variation. If I am not mistaken (says *Dryden*) the distinguishing Character of *Lucretius*, (I mean of his Soul and Genius) is a certain kind of noble Pride, and positive Assertion of his Opinions. He is every where confident of his own Reason, and assuming an absolute Command not only over his vulgar Reader, but even his Patron *Memmius*. For he is always bidding him attend, as if he had the Rod over him; and using a Magisterial Authority, while he instructs him. From his time to ours, says *Dryden*, I know none so like him, as our Poet and Philosopher of *Malmesbury*. This is that perpetual *Diclatorship* which is exercis'd by *Lucretius*; who though often in the wrong, yet seems to deal *bonâ fide* with his Reader, and tells him nothing, but what he thinks; in which plain sincerity, I believe he differs from our *Hobbs*, who (says *Dryden*) could not but be convinc'd, or at least doubt of some *Eternal Truths* which he has oppos'd. But for *Lucretius*, he seems to disdain all manner of Replies, and is so confident of his Cause, that he is before hand with his *Antagonists*; urging for them, what ever he imagin'd they could say; and leaving them, as he supposes, without an Objection for the future. All this too, with so much scorn and indignation, as if he were assur'd of the *Triumph*, before he enter'd into the *Lists*. From this Sublime and daring Genius of his, it must (says *Dryden*) of necessity come to pass, that his thoughts must be Masculine, full of Argumentation, and that sufficiently warm. From the same fiery Temper proceeds the Loftiness of his Expressions, and the perpetual Torrent of his Verse, where the Barrenness

rennets of his Subject does not too much constrain the quickness of his Fancy. For there is no doubt to be made, (*says Dryden*) but that he cou'd have been every where as *Poetical*, as he is in his *Descriptions*, and in the *Moral* part of his *Philosophy*, if he had not aim'd more to *Instruct* in his *System of Nature*, than to *Delight*. But he was bent upon making *Memmius* a Materialist, and teaching him to desie an *Invisible Power*: In short, says *Dryden*, he was so much an *Atheist*, that he forgot sometimes to be a *Poet*. *Dryd.* Pref to the *Sylvæ: Or, The Second Part of Poetical Miscellanies*.

Dr. Thomas Burnet, in the Second Book of his *Theory of the Earth*, chap. x. is of Opinion, That *Lucretius* was an *Epicurean*, more from his Inclination, and the bent of his Spirit, than from Reason, or any Force of Argument. For though his Suppositions be very precarious, and his Reasonings all a long very slight, he will many times strut and triumph, as if he had wrested the *Thunder* out of *Jove's Right-Hand*; and a *Mathematician* (*says Burnet*) is not more confident of his *Demonstration*, than he seems to be of the Truth of his shallow *Philosophy*.

Marcus Valerius Martialis,

BORN at *Bilbo* in *Spain*, in the Reign of *Claudius* the Emperour. When he was Twenty Years of Age he came to *Rome* under *Nero*, and there continued Thirty Five Years, in the good esteem of *Titus*, but

especially of *Domitian*, by whom he was advanced to the *Tribunate* and *Equestrian Dignity*: But upon *Domitian's Death*, he declin'd in his Interest; and therefore in *Trajan's time*, he return'd into his own Country; and there, after he had finish'd his Twelfth Book of *Epigrams*, in the Seventy Fifth Year of his Age he died, being reduc'd to very great poverty. The other Two Books, *viz.* the Thirteenth and Fourteenth, are called, *Xenia*, and *Apophoreta*, and by many thought to have been Writ by some other Hand.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. says, the truest Character that can be given of *Martial's Epigrams*, is what *Martial himself* has given, *lib. 1. Epigr. 17.*

Sunt bona, sunt quædam Mediocria, sunt mala plura.

Pliny the Younger, in the 21. *Epistle* of his Third Book, tells *Priscus*, That *Martial* had a great deal of Wit and Smartness; and that there was diffus'd throughout his whole Work abundance of Salt and Gaul; but yet, that he somtimes show'd great Candour.

Adrianus Turnebus, *lib. 13. cap. 19. Adversar.* says, *Martial* was a Pleasant, Witty Poet; that he can by no means be of their Opinion, who look upon him as an *idle Buffoon*; and that his *Epigrams*, let these men say what they please, are Writ with a great deal of Elegance.

Julius Scaliger, in his Third Book *De Poetica*, *cap. 126.* tells us, That the peculiar Properties of an *Epigram*, are *Brevity* and *Smartness*; this last quality, as *Scaliger* observes, *Catullus* did not always arrive at; but the most acute *Martial* never fail'd.

And in the Sixth Book, pag 838. *Scaliger* remarks, That many of *Martial's Epigrams* are Divine, and that the Style is both pure and exact, and very proper for that

that great variety of Matter; that his Verses are easie and natural, and, in a Word, that they are very good. As for his other *Epigrams* that are obscene, (*says Scaliger*) I am so far from passing any Judgment on them, that indeed I have not so much as read them.

What think'st thou, *Janus Lernatius*? says *Lipsius*, was not *Scaliger*, who thought *Martial's* Verles smooth, *easie* and *natural*, and many of his *Epigrams* to be *Divine*, more in the right; than he who calls him an *idle Buffoon*? Which undecent Expression (*says Lipsius*) I am sorry so great a Man should apply so ill. 'Tis true indeed, *Martial* is nothing compar'd to *Catullus*, I know it well enough; but then this I know too, (*says Lipsius*) that though some of *Catullus's* *Epigrams* are not common and ordinary, yet all are not extraordinary. There are indeed many Lewd and Obscene things in *Martial*; and take my Word for't, (*says Lipsius*) in that little Book of *Catullus* there are every whit as immodest Expressions, but not so many. To conclude, (*says Lipsius*) he must be very ignorant, who knows not, that this was the fault of the Age. *Lipſ. lib. 1. Epiftolicarum Quæſitionum, Epift. v.*

Erasmus, in *Dialogo Ciceroniano*, pag. 147. remarks, That *Martial* had much of *Ovid's* Style, which was easie and natural; nay, that he had somewhat of the Air of *Cicero*: But he tells us, he does not mean in his *Epistles*, which he Writ before some of his Books; which, as *Erasmus* observes, God knows have little of *Cicero* in them.

Morhofius, in his *De Patavinitate Liviana*, pag. 160. tells us, That though *Martial* be charg'd by some ill-natur'd Criticks, for using sometimes the *Spanish-Dialect*; yet this ought not to deprive him of the just honour that's due to him, for his great Elegancy in the *Latin Tongue*.

But notwithstanding our *Author* has had such considerable *Advocates*, that appear'd for him; yet this has
not

not frighten'd some from attacking him in the most opprobrious Manner: Thus,

Muretus says, That *Martial* compar'd to *Catullus*, is an idle fawcy Fellow, a meer *Droll*.

Lilius Gyraldus says, That his *Epigrams* never pleas'd any but a company of *Asses*.

And *Raphael Volaterranus* tells us, That *Martial's Epigrams* are not fit to be read; for that they contain neither *Elegancy*, nor *Morality*.

Vossius, lib. 3. *Institutionum Poeticarum*, pag. 107. observes to us, That *Martial* was one of those Authors, who at the same time he reprov'd Vice, taught it; and though he deserv'd high Commendation for the greatest part of his *Epigrams*; yet by those few that were *Obscene*, he had done infinitely more mischief, than by the *Others* he had done good.

Rapin remarks, That Men of a good Taste, preferr'd the way of *Catullus*, before that of *Martial*; there being more of true delicacy in that, than in this. And in these latter Ages, (*says Rapin*) we have seen a Noble *Venetian*, named *Andreas Naugerius*, who had an exquisite discernment, and who by a natural antipathy against all that which is call'd *Point*, or the *nipping Word* in the *Epigram*, which he judg'd to be of an ill relish, Sacrific'd every Year in Ceremony a Volume of *Martial's Epigrams* to the *Manes* of *Catullus*, in honour to his Character, which he judg'd was to be preferr'd to that of *Martial*.

John Milton,

WAS one whose Natural Parts did deservedly give him a place amongst the Principal of our English Poets. He was Author (not to mention his other Works, both in *Latin* and *English*, by which his Fame is sufficiently known to all the Learned of *Europe*) of Two *Heroick Poems*, and a *Tragedy*; namely, *Paradise Lost*; *Paradise Regain'd*; and *Samson Agonistes*; in which he is generally thought to have very much reviv'd the Majesty, and true *Decorum* of *Heroick Poesie* and *Tragedy*.

Dryden tells us, That in *Epique Poetry*, the *English* have only to boast of *Spencer* and *Milton*; neither of whom wanted either *Genius* or *Learning*, to have been perfect Poets; and yet both of them are liable to many Censures.—As for *Milton*, says Dryden, whom we all admire with so much Justice, his *Subject* is not that of an *Heroick Poem*; properly so call'd: His Design is the losing of our Happiness; his Event is not prosperous, like that of all other *Epique Works*: His Heavenly Machines are many, and his Humané Persons are but two. But I will not (says Dryden) take Mr. Rimer's Work out of his Hands: He has promis'd the World a *Critique* on that Author; wherein, tho' he will not allow his Poem for *Heroick*, I hope he will grant us, that his Thoughts are elevated, his Words sounding, and that no Man has so happily Copy'd the Manner of *Homer*; or so Copiously translated his *Grecisms*, and the *Latin* Elegancies of *Virgil*. 'Tis true, says Dryden, he runs into a flat of Thought, sometimes for a Hundred Lines together,

together, but 'tis when he is got into a Track of Scripture : His Antiquated Words were his Choice, not his Necessity ; for therein he imitated *Spencer*, as *Spencer* did *Chaucer*. And tho', perhaps, the love of their Masters, may have transported both too far, in the frequent use of them ; yet in my Opinion, says *Dryden*, Obsolete words may then be laudably reviv'd, when either they are more Sounding, or more Significant than those in practice : And when their Obscurity is taken away, by joyning other Words to them which clear the Sense ; according to the Rule of *Horace*, for the admission of New Words. But in both Cases, says *Dryden*, a Moderation is to be observ'd, in the use of them : For unnecessary *Coynage*, as well as unnecessary *Revival*, runs into Affectation ; a fault to be avoided on either hand. Neither (says *Dryden*) will I justifie *Milton*, for his *Blank Verse*, tho' I may excuse him, by the Example of *Hannibal Caro*, and other *Italians*, who have us'd it : For whatever Causes he alledges for the abolishing of *Rhyme*, his own particular Reason is plainly this, that *Rhyme* was not his Talent ; he had neither the Ease of doing it, nor the Graces of it ; which is manifest in his *Juvenilia*, or Verses written in his Youth : Where his *Rhyme* is always constrain'd and forc'd, and comes hardly from him at an Age when the Soul is most pliant ; and the Passion of love, makes almost every Man a *Rhymer*, though not a Poet. *Dryd.* Dedic. before the Translat. of *Juvenal*, pag. 8, 9.

I consulted (says *Dryden*) a greater Genius than *Cowley*, (without offence to the *Manes* of that Noble Author) I mean *Milton*, for the Beautiful Turns of Words and Thoughts. But as he endeavours every where to express *Homer*, whose Age had not arriv'd to that fineness,

fineness, I found in him (says Dryden) a true Sublimity, lofty Thoughts, which were cloath'd with admirable Grecisms, and Ancient Words, which he had been digging from the Mines of Chaucer, and of Spencer, and which, with all their Rusticity, had somewhat of Venerable in them: But, says Dryden, I found not there what I look'd for, viz. any Elegant Turns, either on the Word, or on the Thought. *Dryd.* *Ibid.* pag. 50.

The Authors of the *Athenian Mercury*, in Answer to the 3d Question of Vol. 5. Numb. 14. viz. Whether Milton and Waller were not the best English Poets? and which the better of the two? do reply in these Words:

We shall answer this double Question together: They were both Excellent in their Kind, and exceeded each other, and all besides. Milton was the fullest and loftiest; Waller the neatest and most correll Poet we ever had. But yet we think Milton wrote too little in Verse, and too much in Prose, to carry the Name of Best from all Others; and Mr. Waller, tho' a full and noble Writer, yet comes not up in our Judgments to that — Mens divinior atque os — *Magna Sonaturum*, as Horace calls it, which Milton has, and wherein we think he was never equall'd.—His Description of the Pandæmonium, his Battles of the Angels, his Creation of the World, his Dgression of Light, in his *Paradise Lost*, are all Inimitable Pieces; And even that antique Style which he uses, seems to become the Subject, like the strange Dresses wherein we represent the old Heroes. The Description of Samson's Death, the artificial and delicate preparation of the Incidents and Narrations, the Turn of the whole, and more than all, the terrible Satyr on Woman, in his Discourse with Dalilah, are undoubtedly of a piece with his other Writings; and to say nothing of his *Paradise Regain'd*, whereof he had only finish'd the most barren

part, in his *Juvenile Poems*; Those on *Mirth and Melancholly*; an *Elegy* on his Friend that was drown'd; and especially a *Fragment* of the *Passion*, are incomparable: However, we think him not so general a Poet, as some we have formerly had, and others still surviving.

John Oldham,

THE Son of a Non-Conformist Minister, was born at *Shipton* in *Glocestershire*, on the 9th. of *August*, 1653. He was of *St. Edmund's Hall* in *Oxford*. He died of the small Pox, on the 9th. of *Decemb.* 1683.

Winstanley calls Mr. *John Oldham*, The Delight of the *Muses*, and Glory of these last Times; a Man utterly unknown to me, says the same *Author*, but by his Works; which none can read but with Wonder and Admiration; so pithy his Strains, so sententious his Expressions, so Elegant his Oratory, so swimming his Language, so smooth his Lines; in *Translating* out-doing the *Original*, and in Invention matchless.

Dryden, To the Memory of Mr. *Oldham*.

*Farewell, too little and too lately known,
Whom I began to think and call my own;
For sure our Souls were near ally'd; and thine
Cast in the same Poetick Mould with Mine.*

One Common Note on either Lyre did strike,
 And Knaves and Fools were both abhorr'd alike :
 To the same Goal did both our Studies drive,
 The last set out, the soonest did arrive.
 Thus Nisus fell upon the Slippery place,
 While his young Friend perform'd and won the Race.
 O early ripe! to thy abundant Store
 What could advancing Age have added more?
 It might (what Nature never gives the young)
 Have taught the Numbers of thy Native Tongue.
 But Satyr needs not those, and Wit will shine
 Through the harsh Cadence of a rugged Line.
 A noble Error, and but seldom made,
 When Poets are by too much force betray'd.
 Thy generous Fruits, tho' gather'd e're their prime,
 Still shew'd a Quickness; and maturing time
 But mellows what we write to the dull Sweets of Rime.
 Once more, Hail and Farewell; Farewell thou young,
 But ah too short, Marcellus of our Tongue;
 Thy Brows with Ivy, and with Laurels bound;
 But Fate and Gloomy Night encompas thee around.

Dryden.

Dursey in Memory of John Oldham :

Obscure and Cloudy did the day appear,
 As Heaven design'd to blot it from the Tear :
 The Elements all seem'd to disagree,
 At least, I'm sure, they were at strife in me :
 Possess'd with Spleen, which Melancholy bred ;
 When Rumor told me, that my Friend was dead,
 That Oldham, honour'd for his early Worth,
 Was cropt, like a sweet Blossom, from the Earth,

Where late he grew, delighting every Eye
In his rare Garden of Philosophy.
The fatal sound new Sorrows did infuse,
And all my Griefs were doubled at the News :
For we with mutual Arms of Friendship strove,
Friendship the true and solid part of Love ;
And he so many Graces had in store,
That Fame or Beauty could not bind me more.
His Wit in his Immortal Verse appears,
Many his Virtues were, tho' few his Tears ;
Which were so spent, as if by Heaven contriv'd
To lash the Vices of the longer liv'd.
None was more skilful, none more learn'd than he,
A Poet in its sacred Quality :
Inspir'd above, and could command each Passion,
Had all the Wit without the Affectation.
A calm of Nature still possesst his Soul,
No canker'd Envy did his Breast controul :
Modest as Virgins that have never known
The jilting Breeding of the nauseous Town ;
And easie as his Numbers that sublime
His lofty Strains, and beautifie his Rhime,
Till the Time's Ignomy inspir'd his Pen,
And rouz'd the drowsie Satyr from his Den ;
Then fluttering Fops were his Aversion still,
And felt the Power of his Satyrick Quill.
The Spark whose Noise proclaims his empty Pate,
That struts along the Mall with antick Gate ;
And all the Phyllis and the Chloris Fools
Were damn'd by his Invective Muse in Shoals.
Who on the Age look'd with impartial Eyes,
And aim'd not at the Person, but the Vice.
To all true Wit he was a constant Friend,
And as he well could Judge, could well Commend.

The

*The mighty Homer he with care perus'd,
And that great Genius to the World infus'd ;
Immortal Virgil, and Lucretius too,
And all the Seeds o'th' Soul his Reason knew :
Like Ovid; could the Ladies Hearts assail,
With Horace sing, and lash with Juvenal.
Unskill'd in nought that did with Learning dwell,
But Pride to know he understood it well.
Adieu thou modest Type of perfect Man ;
Ah, had not thy Perfections that began
In Life's bright Morning been eclips'd so soon,
We all had bask'd and wanton'd in thy Noon ;
But Fate grew envious of thy growing Fame,
And knowing Heav'n, from whence thy Genius came,
Assign'd thee by immutable Decree
A glorious Crown of Immortality,
Snatch'd thee from all thy Mourning Friends below,
Just as the Bays were planting on thy Brow.
Thus Worldly Merit has the Worlds Regard ;
But Poets in the next have their Reward :
And Heaven in Oldham's Fortune seem'd to show,
No Recompence was good enough below :
So to prevent the Worlds ingrateful Crimes,
Enrich'd his Mind, and bid him die betimes.*

T. Durfey.

This most celebrated Poet died in the House of his Noble Patron, the Earl of Kingstone, at Holme Pierpont, in the year, 1683. and was buried in the Church there. Soon after was a Monument put over his Grave, with this *Inscription* thereon.

M. S. Joh. Oldham Poetæ, quô nemo sacro furore plenior, nemo rebus Sublimior, aut Verbis felicius audax ; cuius famam omni ævo propria satis consecrabant Carmina. Quem

Quem inter primos Honoratissimi Gulielmi Comitis de Kingstone Patroni Sui Amplexus Variolis correptum, heu nimis immatura Mors rapuit, & in Cœlestem transluit Chorum. Natus apud Shipton in Agro Glocestrensi, in Aula Sti. Edmundi Graduatus. Obiit die Decembris nono, Anno Dom. 1683. Ætatis 30.

Oppian,

ACician, a famous Poet, who liv'd in the time of the Emperours, *Severus* and *Caracalla*; He wrote a Poem of *Fishing*, call'd *Halicutica*; and another of *Hunting*, call'd *Cynegetica*; and a third of *Fowling*.

He dedicated his two Poems of *Fishing* and *Hunting*, both yet extant, to the Emperour *Caracalla*, of whom he receiv'd for every Verse a Piece of Gold; which was the occasion of their being call'd *Golden Verses*.

He dy'd of the *Plague* about the latter end of *Caracalla's Reign*, in the Thirtieth Year of his Age.

Julius Scaliger, had a most particular esteem for this Author; he tells us, in his *Poetica*, pag. 664, and 758. That Oppian is a most Excellent Poet; that he is agreeable and easie; his Style natural, and yet sublime, eloquent and harmonious. So that, he has not only surpass'd *Gratius* and *Nemesianus*, who have writ of the same Subject; but he seems to have the very Air of *Virgil*, whom he endeavour'd particularly to imitate; and indeed, says *Scaliger*, I always thought, he gave us the true, lively Image of that *Divine Poet*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag. 16. observes, That the *Style* of *Oppian* is Copious and Beautiful, abounding with Excellent Sentences, sometimes a little obscure, but always Learned; And that his *Prefaces* are so very elaborate, and of that *Asiatick* form, that they may well enough pass for so many *Harangues*, and *Panegyrick Orations*.

Le Sieur Craffo, in his account of the *Greek Poets*, Writ in *Italian*, says, That the particular excellency of *Oppian* lies in his *Thoughts*. and *Comparisons*; and, that he had done one very difficult thing, which was, his observing an Uniformity in all parts, and yet that he could both preserve the Elegancy of his Style, and at the same time so throughly prosecute the Subject he had in hand.

Tanaquillus Faber, in his First Book of *Epistles*, *Epist. 63.* speaking of *Oppian*, calls him, That admirable, and never to be enough commended *Poet*.

Isaac Casaubon, in an *Epistle to Gunradus Ritterhusius*, Dated in September, 1597. says, Never any Man Lov'd *Oppian* better than he did.

Gunradus Ritterhusius, in his *Preface before Oppian's Works*, tells us, That *Oppian* was a very good Man, and an Excellent Poet; agreeable to all, offensive to none; that his Death was much lamented by all good Men, whether they were his Fellow-Citizens, (who both built him a Monument, and erected his Statue) or such Foreigners as had ever heard of his Fame.

He likewise adds, that *Oppian's Poems* were very choice and extraordinary, and came behind none of the *Greek Poets*; nay, that they were to be preferr'd before the greatest part of them; so that in his Opinion, every Verse was Richly worth a Piece of *Gold*.

Nor

144 Characters and Censures.

Nor am I (*says Ritterhusius*) singular herein; for I dare be hold to say, that all the Men of Learning and Prudence are of the same Judgment.

Dr. Brown, in his First Book, and Eighth Chapter of *Vulgar Errors*, remarks, That *Oppian* in his *Poems of Hunting and Fishing*, hath but sparingly inserted the Vulgar Conceptions thereof. So that abating the annual Mutation of Sexes in the *Hiæna*, the single Sex of the *Rhinoceros*, the Antipathy between two Drums of a *Lamb* and a *Wolfe's Skin*, the informity of *Cubs*, the *Venation* of *Centaures*, the *Copulation* of the *Muræna* and the *Viper*, with some few others, *Oppian* may (*says Brown*) be Read with great delight and profit. It is not without some Wonder his Elegant Lines are so neglected; for surely hereby (*says Brown*) we reject one of the best *Epick Poets*.

Rapin, in his *Reflexions upon Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie*, part 2. sect. xv. says, that *Oppian* is dry.

Claudius Verderius, in his *Censure of Ancient Authors*, observes to us, That *Oppian* did commonly mistake one Fish for another.

Arnoldus de Boot, lib 3. cap. 11. *Animadvers. Sacr. in Vetus Testamentum*, remarks, That *Oppian* in his Description of a *Well-bred Horse*, has taken several Things out of the Thirty Ninth Chapter of *Job*.

Publius

Publius Ovidius Naso,

A Famous Poet, born at *Sulmo*, which is Nineteen Miles distant from *Rome*, in the Second Year of the 184. Olympiad, One and Forty Years before *Christ*. He was once in great Favour with *Augustus*; but either for some freedom us'd with his Daughter *Julia*, or for his Lascivious Verses, he Banish'd him to *Pontus*, at Fifty Years of Age; where, after Eight Years and some Months, he died.

Many of his Writings are extant, but to our great grief some are quite lost, as his *Halieutica*, his *Medea*, and the Six last Books of his *Fasti*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag. 51. tells us, That *Ovid* had spent his Youth in the Study of the *Law*, but afterwards finding his *Genius* more inclin'd to *Amours* and *Poetry*, he went to *Rome*, and there, by reason of the sweetness of his Temper, the nobleness of his Extraction, and the beauty of his Poetry, he soon grew into Fame and Reputation. And indeed, says *Borrichius*, never was there a *Poet* more easie and more natural, or of greater quickness and readiness than *Ovid*.

Erasmus, in his *Dialogus Ciceronianus*, pag. 147. calls *Ovid*, The *Cicero* among the *Poets*.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 2. is of the opinion, That no Man ever did, or can imitate, that easiness of Style which was in *Ovid*.

But *Vossius*, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, pag. 30. tells us, That though indeed generally *Ovid* is very easie and Natural in his Style, yet sometimes, by his *Transposing* of *Words*, he seems to be quite otherwise.

As when at the very beginning of his *De Arte Amandi*, he says,

Siquis in hoc artem populo non novit Amandi.

Whereas (*says Fossius*) it might better have been express'd thus:

Siquis in hoc populo legem non novit Amandi.

Daniel Heinicus, in his *De Tragœdiæ Constitutione*, cap. 13., says, That *Ovid* Transcends all other Authors either in making things that are *false* seem *probable*; or things that are *obscure*, *perspicuous*; and in curiously adorning both the *one* and the *other*; or else in relating things *plainly*, and *nakedly*, as they are.

He further observes, That *Ovid* is every where full of *Moral Instructions*; even when he is frolicksome and wanton: That no body knew better how to express himself, nor how to level his Thoughts to the meanest Capacity with more advantage.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Prolegomenis Manilianis*, remarks, That it was a *false*, and an undeserved Character that some had affix'd to *Ovid*, viz. That he never knew when to give over.

Obertus Gifanius, in his *Apolog. pro Poet. Lat.* pag. 484. tells us, That *Ovid* was so exquisitely skill'd in the *Latin Tongue*, that, according to the opinion of all Learned Men, if the *Roman Language* were utterly lost, and nothing left but the Works of *Ovid*, they alone would be sufficient to retrieve it again.

Quintilian, lib. x. cap. 1. informs us, That *Ovid* in his *Heroicks* is frolicksome and wanton, and that he has too good an.

an Opinion of himself; but yet in some respects, he deserves to be commended.

Seneca, in the Third Book of his *Natural Questions*, cap 27. calls Ovid the most Ingenious of all the Poets: but, as he observes, 'twas a thousand pities, he spent his excellent Talent upon such Childish, trifling Subjects, as some of his were.

Dryden, in his *Pref. to the Sylvæ, or the Second Part of Poetical Miscellanies*, remarks, That Ovid with all his sweetness, has but little variety of Numbers and Sound; that he is always as it were upon the *Hand-Gallop*, and his Verse runs upon *Carpet Ground*. He avoids all *Synalæphi's*, or cutting off one *Vowel* when it comes before another, in the following Word: So that minding only Smoothness, he wants both Variety and Majesty.

Dryden for all this, in his *Dedication before Examen Poeticum*, or the *Third Part of Miscellany Poems*, tells us, That Ovid is certainly more palatable to the Reader, than any of the Roman Wits, though some of them are more Lofty, some more instructive, and others more Correct. He had Learning enough, says Dryden, to make him equal to the Best. But as his Verse came easily, he wanted the toyl of Application to amend it. He is often Luxuriant, both in his Fancy and Expressions; and not always Natural. If Wit be *Pleasantry*, says Dryden, he has it to excess: But if it be *Propriety*, *Lucretius*, *Horace*, and above all *Virgil*, are his Superiours.

Tanaquillus Faber, in his First Book of *Epistles*, Epist. 37. says, That Ovid is full of Wit in every part of him, which no Man, who wanted not Wit himself, did ever deny; and that all Men do likewise agree, his Learning is every where Conspicuous: But I know not, says Faber, whether Ovid did any where shew more Wit and Learning, than in his Second Book *De Tristibus*. Nor is

this (says my Author) much to be Wonder'd at; since he was to plead his own cause before *Augustus*, a Prince of Learning, and who was also a Poet.

And in the same Book, *Epiſt. 71.* He tells us, he does not know in all the *Latin Tongue*, any thing of greater Wit and Elegancy, ever Writ by any Poet, than *Ovid's Eighth Elegy* of the Second Book *Ponticorum*; every thing in it so neat, so fine, so full of variety, so Pathetick, and so very Elegant.

What a high opinion *Ovid* had of the *Elegies* of his own Composing, plainly appears by those two arrogant Verses of his, in the *Remedia Amoris*, *vers. 395, 396.*

Tantum se nobis Elegi debere fatentur;
Quantum Virgilio nobile debet Epos.

He thought the World was as much behoden to him for the *Elegy*, as ever it was to *Virgil* for the *Epick*. But had this come from some other hand, it would certainly have carried greater Modesty, if not Authority.

Rapin, in his *Reflex. on Aristotle of Poesie*, part 2. ſect. 29. ſays, That they who have Writ *Elegy* best amongst the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. *Tibullus* is elegant and polite; *Propertius* noble and high; but *Ovid* is to be preferr'd to both; because he is more Natural, more moving, and more passionate; and thereby he has better expressed the Character of *Elegy* than the others.

But notwithstanding this, the same Author tells us, in his *Comparing of Homer and Virgil*, cap. xi. That many of those Examples and Comparisons, which *Ovid* makes uſe of in his *De Trifibus*, and his other *Elegies*, are meerly Superfluous, and do plainly ſhew, that

that Ovid was not arriv'd to a full Maturity of Judgment.

Julius Scaliger, In the Sixth Book of his *Poetica*, pag. 855. remarks, That Ovid's *De Tristibus* and *De Ponto* (both which Titles he finds fault with) are less elaborate than his other Pieces, and especially than his *E-pistles*.

Abraham Cowley, in his *Preface*, observes, that one may see through the Style of Ovid *De Tristibus*, the humbled and dejected condition of Spirit with which he Wrote it; there scarce remain any footsteps of that *Genius*, *Quem nec Jovis ira, nec ignes, &c.* The Cold of the Country (says Cowley) had stricken through all his Faculties, and benumb'd the very Feet of his Verses. He is himself, methinks, like one of the Stories of his own *Metamorphosis*; and though there remain some weak Resemblances of Ovid at Rome, it is but as he says of Niobe,

*In vultu color est sine Sanguine, Lumina mæstis
Stant immota genis; nihil est in Imagine vivum
Flet tamen—*

OVID. *Metamorph. Lib. 6.*

How highly Ovid esteem'd, and valued the Fifteen Books of his *Metamorphosis*, he himself gives us to understand, by those Two Verses, towards the End of the said Work:

*Jamque Opus exegi: quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignes,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas.*

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poet. Lat.* says, That Ovid, in his *Metamorphosis*, copied after one *Parthenius* of Chios, a Poet, who had writ in Greek an excellent Poem upon

upon the same Subject.—He further says, This Work of Ovid's was so highly esteem'd of by the Grecian Wits, that they translated it into their own Language; and that it was full of great Variety of Learning; although the Author, as he himself attests, had not put his finishing hand to it. And Crinitus assures us, it was publish'd by some of his Friends, in his absence, and without his Knowledge.

Vossius also, in his *De Imitatione Poeticâ*, cap. 6. pag. 26. informs us, That Ovid himself did not think his *Metamorphosis* correct enough; which was the ground of his Complaint in the first and third Book *De Tristibus*. And therefore, when he was to be banish'd, he had fully resolv'd to have burnt it; as he had done by some others of his Books, according to his own Relation in the Tenth Elegy of the fourth Book, *De Tristibus*. But it was then too late; for his Friends had by that time got Copies of it.

Rapin observes to us, in his *Reflex.* on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie, part 2. sect. xv. That Ovid has *Wit*, *Art*, and *Design* in his *Metamorphosis*; but withal he has *Youthfulness* that could hardly be pardon'd, but for the Vivacity of his *Wit*, and a certain Happiness of *Fancy*.

He also tells us, in his Comparison of Homer and Virgil, chap. x. That Ovid both in his *Metamorphosis*, and his *Epistolæ Heroidum*, as also *Velleius Paterculus*, were the first Authors who brought into fashion the use of extraordinary and surprizing *Epithets*; whereas that Age had (before) in a particular manner affected a plainness of Speech, and an unaffected sort of Dialect. But, says Rapin, These Authors had Judgment enough how to put off these false Diamonds.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag. 51. remarks, That Ovid's Style in his *Metamorphosis*, is not so lofty as in some other Pieces of his; but at the same time he owns, there is beauty and exactness enough in it. He further observes, that the fifteen Books of the *Metamorphosis*, are in this respect highly to be admir'd, inasmuch as they do, in that wonderful Order, and as it were with a certain Chain and concatenation, present to us almost all the *Fables* of the *Ancients*, from the beginning of the World, to that very time.

And to the same effect, *Vossius*, lib. 3. *Institut. Poetic.* pag. 19, 20. tells us, That Ovid had shew'd such prodigious Art and Skill in the close Connexion of these *Fables*, that he is (indeed) worthy of the highest admiration.

And we find, the very same thing is affirm'd by *Gulielmus Canterus*, lib. 1. *Novarum Lectionum*, cap. xx. where he informs us, that he was so Charm'd with the Excellent Order, that Ovid had observ'd in the *Linking* and *Chaining* these *Fables* one to the Other; that he could not forbear reducing the whole Work into an *Epitome*; that so, as in a Picture, he might with one view see, and admire, the several parts of this most Incomparable Poem.

Petrus Crinitus says, That Ovid compos'd Six Books of his *Fasti*, which he sent to *Germanicus* the Son of *Drusus*, the other Six, by reason of his sudden Death, or, as many think, his unhappy Banishment, he could not go through with.

This, says *Crinitus*, is a very Learned Piece, and contains abundance of Choice Learning.

Julius Scaliger, lib. 6. *Poetics*, pag. 855. takes notice, That the Style of Ovid in his *Fasti*, is easie, soft, and natural; and that it is a Work which abounds with a great

great deal of Ancient Learning ; and although the Subject is not always equally tractable, nor capable of being adorn'd ; nor has he often Scope enough for his Wit ; yet (says Scaliger) in many places of this Poem, he goes beyond himself in politeness and purity of Style.

Mr. John Selden was of the Opinion, that Ovid was not only a fine Poet, but (as a Man may say) a great Canon-Lawyer, as appears in his *Fasti*, where we have more of the Festivals of the Old Romans, than any where else : 'Tis pity, says Selden, the rest are lost.
Selden's Table-Talk, pag. 41.

Rapin, in his Comparison of Homer and Virgil, chap. xi. prefers the *Fasti* of Ovid before any of his other Works.

Here, says Rapin, we find both the Prudence and the Temper of his Elder Years ; whereas every where else he shew's himself a young Man.

Le Sieur Rostean, in his *Censure of Books and Authors*, conceives, that Ovid's *Epistles* are beyond any Man's power to imitate ; And that they do far exceed either his *Metamorphosis*, or his *Fasti*.

Crinitus tells us, That Ovid in his *Epistles*, us'd very great Elegancy ; and that they were compos'd with wonderful Art and Skill.

Scaliger, lib. 6. *Poetics*, pag. 855. says, The *Epistles* are the most polite of all the Works of Ovid ; that the Thoughts are admirable, his Elegancy natural and easie ; and, in a Word, that they have a true Poetical Air.

Rapin, in his Comparison of Homer and Virgil, chap. xi. mentioning Ovid's *Epistolæ Heroidum*, he calls them, *The Flower of the Roman Wit*. Which yet he owns, fall

fall very much short, of that maturity of Judgment which is the chief Perfection of *Virgil*.

The Writers of the *August History* report, That the Emperour *Aelius Verus*, was so much in love with that little Piece of *Ovid*, *De Arte Amandi*, that he would often read him in his Bed; and when he went to sleep, he would use to put him under his Pillow.

Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, in his *De Vanitate Scientiarum*, cap. 63. observes, That there have been many both Greek and Latin Poets, who have discover'd their Wanton Amours, as *Callimachus*, *Philetas*, *Anacreon*, *Orpheus*, *Alceon*, *Pindar*, *Sappho*, *Tibullus*, *Catullus*, *Propertius*, *Virgil*, *Juvenal*, *Martial*, *Cornelius Gallus*, and many others, more like Pandars than Poets; though all of them were out-done by *Ovid* in his *Heroick Epistles*, dedicated to *Corinna*, which were also out-done by himself in his *De Arte Amandi*; which, says *Agrippa*, he might better have Entituled, *The Art of Whoring and Pimping*: The Learning whereof, because it had Corrupted Youth with unchast Documents, therefore (says *Agrippa*) was the Author deservedly banish'd by the Emperour *Octavianus Augustus*, to the farthest parts of the North.

It were to be wish'd, says *Vossius*, lib. 11. *Institutionum Poeticarum*, pag. 73. That *Ovid's Medea* were Extant. For so great was the Wit of that Man, that scarce any thing *Humane*, is comparable to him; if he has any fault, it is, that, as great Rivers do, he sometimes over-flows. Which admit it be a fault, he sufficiently makes amends for it, by his many Excellent Qualities.

Aulus Persius Flaccus,

WAS born at *Volateriae*, a City in *Hetruria*, now call'd *Tuscany*, in *Italy*. He died in the 29th. Year of his Age, and in the 62 Year of Christ.

He wrote Six *Satyrs*, on which (as He himself tells us) he bestow'd a great deal of labour and pains. And yet, says *Crinitus*, there are not those wanting, who do affirm, that this Work is imperfet, and was never finish'd by *Persius*. When these *Satyrs* were first Publish'd, *Crinitus* says, it is not to be imagin'd how highly they were esteem'd among the Learned. He Copied after the Poet *Lucilius*, who was very sharp in his *Invectives* against the Vices of the Romans.

Quintilian, lib. 10. cap. 1. says, That *Persius* deserved a great deal of true Glory, even by this one Book.

Martial tells us, That *Persius* got more Credit by this one little Book, than others did by their many large Volumes :

*Sæpius in libro memoratur Persius uno,
Quam levis in totâ Marsus Amazonide.*

Martial. lib. 4. Epigr. 28.

Lilius Gyraldus remarks, That tho' the *Satyrs* of *Persius* are very obscure, and for the most part full of Things that are abstruse; yet for all that, he ought to be number'd among the *Good Authors*.

Persius

Persius obscure, but full of Sense and Wit,
Affected Brevity in all he Writ.

Boileau's Art of Poetry.

Vossius lib. 6. *Institutionum Oratoriarum*, pag. 454, says, That Persius the Satyrist, ought to be pardon'd for his often using such bold and high-flown Metaphors. Since not only the Soul, but likewise the Expression of that Noble Youth, aim'd at nothing but what was Great and Lofty.

Cardinal Bona, in his *Notitia Auctorum*, tells us, That Persius was an acute Satyrist, but obscure ; affecting a high topping Style ; and that his frequent and extravagant Metaphors, did often cause him to be so Obscure. Though, as Bona observes, the Obscurity of Persius, did oftentimes proceed from our being ignorant of several of those Customes, which he alludes to, and which in his time even the Meanest of the People understood ; which since we are now ignorant of, we do therefore (forsooth) conclude them to be *Mysteries*.

The truth on't is, says Francis Vavassor, the Jesuite, in his *De Ludicra Dictione*, pag. 239, &c. I cannot but Wonder, what great and mighty Matters Quintilian and Martial found in the Six Satyrs of Persius, which we so long after have not been able to find out, nay, not so much as to guesst at. And yet certainly, there is nothing in him, but what may well appear Greater to us in these days, than ever possibly they cou'd to the Ancients ; because they were acquainted with many of the Customs that where in his time ; and therefore they esteem'd them (as well they might) to be Things not at all extraordinary ; whereas, the very same Things, by a distance of many Ages, seem to us as mighty *Mysteries* : So that we are

apt to call those Things by the name of *Deep and Profound Learning*, which in *these times* the *Servants and Tradesmen*, nay even the very *Mob* themselves, perfectly understood. Hence therefore *Vavassor Concludes*, There is nothing in *Persius*, that deserves our highest commendation, much less our Admiration. For, says he, to speak the truth, that which to me seems most remarkable in this Author, is his *Obscurity*; which, in all probability, was the first ground of his being reputed so *Profoundly Learned*. His *Verses*, says *Vavassor*, seem just like the *Oracles* of Old, which stand in need of some body to *Interpret* them: Now, if *Persius* became thus *Obscure*, before he was aware; it was certainly a great fault; but if he did it for the nonce, there is no reason why so many should admire his Writings, which they understand not; Or, why they should commend a Writer, who had no mind to be understood.— For my part, says *Vavassor*, I give to *Persius* the deference that is due to him: I allow him his *jeſts*, his *dry bobbs*, his *Wit*, and his *Sarcasms*: nor will I take from him his *Latin*, which as it is not the very best, so I must own, it is none of the Worst.

Julius Scaliger, lib. 6. Poetices, pag. 838. remarks, That *Persius* had a crabbed, unpleasant sort of Style; And, in plain terms, he calls him, a silly, Trifling Author, a perfect *Bragadocio*, and one who valued himself much upon the account of his Learning, which was hot and seaverish; and, in conclusion, *Scaliger* thought him by no means fit to come into Competition with *Juvenal* or *Horace*.

Joseph Scaliger, in Scaligerana 1. and 2. calls *Persius*, a sorry Poet, and a most wretched Author; who minded nothing so much as to render himself *Obscure*; for which reason he was call'd, *The blind Poet*. And yet for all this Character, *Scaliger* owns, they might by way

way of *Comment* write excellent Things upon him. As *Vavassor* observes *Casaubon* did, whose *Comment* upon *Persius*, as he tells us, was much more to be valu'd, than the Text it self.

Rapin, in the Second part of his *Reflex.* on *Aristotle* of *Poesie*, sect. 28. observes, That *Persius*, who to the gravity and vehemence of *Juvenal* had joyn'd *Obscurity* (caus'd by the affectation he had to appear *Learned*) has no better success, in making an Impression; because he yields no delight: Not but that he has (says *Rapin*) some touches of an *hidden delicacy*; but these Strokes are always wrap'd up in so much profound Learning, that there needs a *Comment* to unfold them; He speaks not but with *Sadness*, what by *Horace* is said with the greatest *Mirth* imaginable, whom sometimes he wou'd imitate. His moroseness, says *Rapin*, scarce ever leaves him; he speaks not of the *least Things* but in a *heat*; and he never *Sports*, but after the most *serious manner* in the World.

Vossius, lib. III. *Institut. Poetic.* pag. 41. will have it, That *Persius* either did not understand the Rules of *Satyr*, or at least that he ne're minded, or observ'd them; because he only attack'd some few *Particular Persons*, instead of reproving *Vice in General*: And when he had a mind to take notice of, or touch upon the Faults, or Actions of such *Particular Persons*, he commonly makes use of some general Name; such as *Titus*, or *Nævius*; which does not give us light enough to know, either the *Fact*, or the *Person*. And therefore, says *Vossius*, this Poem of *Persius* does scarce deserve the Name of a *Satyre*; because he reflects upon no body by Name.

Dryden remarks, That as for the *Verse* of *Persius*, neither *Casaubon* himself, nor any for him, can defend either his *Numbers*, or the *Purity* of his *Latin*. *Casaubon* gives this point for lost; and pretends not to justify either the *Measures*, or the *Words* of *Persius*: He is evidently beneath *Horace* and *Juvenal*, in both.

Then, as his *Verse* is scabrous and hobbling, and his *Words* not every where well chosen, the purity of *Latin* being more corrupted, than in the time of *Juvenal*, and consequently of *Horace*, who writ when the Language was in the height of its perfection; so his *Diction* is hard; his *Figures* are generally too bold and daring; and his *Tropes*, particularly his *Metaphors*, insufferably strain'd.

In the third place, notwithstanding all the diligence of *Casaubon*, *Stelluti*, and a *Scotch Gentleman* (whom, says *Dryden*, I have heard extreamly commended for his *Illustrations* of him:) yet he is still *obscure*: Whether he affected not to be understood, but with difficulty; Or, whether the fear of his safety under *Nero*, compell'd him to this Darkness in some places; Or, that it was occasion'd by his close way of Thinking, and the brevity of his Style, and crowding of his Figures; Or, lastly, whether after so long a time, many of his *Words* have been corrupted; and many *Customs*, and *Stories* relating to them, lost to us; whether some of these Reasons, or all, concurr'd to render him so Cloudy; we may be bold to affirm, (says *Dryden*) that the best of *Commentators* can but guess at his meaning, in many passages: And none can be certain that he has divin'd rightly.

After all, (says *Dryden*) *Persius* was a Young Man, like his Friend and Contemporary *Lucan*: Both of them Men of extraordinary Parts, and great acquir'd Knowledge,

ledge, considering their Youth. But neither of them had arriv'd to that Maturity of Judgment, which is necessary to the Accomplishing of a Form'd Poet. And this consideration, as on the one hand it lays some Imperfections to their charge, so on the other side 'tis a candid excuse for those Failings, which are incident to Youth and inexperience; and we have more reason to wonder, how they, who dy'd before the Thirtieth Year of their Age, could Write so well, and think so strongly; than to accuse them of those Faults, from which *Humane Nature*, and more especially in *Youth*, can never possibly be exempted.

But (*says Dryden*) to consider *Persius* yet more closely: *He* rather insulted over *Vice* and *Folly*, than exposed them, like *Juvenal* and *Horace*. And as *Chast*, and *Modest* as *Persius* is esteem'd, it cannot be deny'd, but that in some places he is broad and fulsome, as the latter Verses of the Fourth *Satire*, and of the Sixth, sufficiently Witness. And 'tis to be believ'd, that he who Commits the same Crime often, and without Necessity, cannot but do it with some kind of Pleasure.

But to come to a Conclusion, says *Dryden*, *Persius* is manifestly below *Horace*; because he borrows most of his greatest Beauties from him: And *Casaubon* is so far from denying this; that he has written a Treatise purposely concerning it; wherein he shews a multitude of his Translations from *Horace*, and his Imitations of him, for the Credit of his Author; which he calls *Imitatio Horatiana*. *Dydg. Dedic.* before the *Translat.* of *Juvenal*, pag. xxx.

Dryden tells us, That the *Philosophy* in which *Persius* was educated, and which he professes through his whole Book, is the *Stoick*: And herein it is, says *Dryden*, that *Persius* has excell'd both *Juvenal* and *Horace*. He sticks

to his own *Philosophy*: He shifts not sides, like *Horace*, who is sometimes an *Epicuræan*, sometimes a *Stoick*, sometimes an *Eclectick*; as his present Humour leads him: Nor declaims like *Juvenal* against Vices, more like an *Orator*, than a *Philosopher*. *Persius* is every where the same: True to the *Dogma's* of his Master: what he has learnt, he teaches Vehemently; and what he teaches, that he Practices himself. There is (says *Dryden*) a Spirit of Sincerity in all he says: You may easily discern that he is in Earnest, and is perswaded of that truth which he inculcates. In this, says *Dryden*, I am of Opinion, that he excels *Horace*, who is commonly in jeast, and laughs while he instructs: And is equal to *Juvenal*, who was as honest and serious as *Persius*, and more he cou'd not be. *Dryd. ibid. pag. xxxiii.*

Franciscus Petrarcha,

A Florentine Poet, Renowned both for *Latin* and *Italian* Poesie. He was born at *Arezzo*, a City of *Tuscany*, on the xxth. day of *July*, 1304. He was *Arch-Deacon* of *Parma*; and afterwards *Canon* of the *Cathedral Church* at *Padua*. He died suddenly of an *Apoplexy*, on the xixth. of *July* 1374.

He wrote many things in *Verse* as well as in *Prose*.

Philippus Labbeus, in his *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, says, that *Petrarcha* was the most Considerable Man in that Age, for Wit, Eloquence, and Politeness in the *Latin* and *Italian* Languages, as also for skill in the *Italian*

talian and Latin Poesie ; and that He was the First, who rais'd Learning out of that Gothick darkness, after it had lain buried for many Ages.

Laurentius Pignorius, in his *Symbolæ Epistoliceæ*, Epist. 111. calls Petrarch a Man of very great Learning, and, considering the time he liv'd in, of a most Elegant Style.

Sixtus Senensis, in the fourth Book of his *Bibliotheca Sancta*, tells us, That Petrarch was Universally Learned ; that he was the first Restorer of the *Latin Tongue*, which had been quite extinct for several Centuries ; that He was the First, and beyond all dispute the Best, who wrote *Italian Poetry* ; And that amongst the *Latin Poets* he had so good a Character, that in the *Capitol at Rome*, by an Universal Approbation, he was chose *Poet Laureat*.

Lilius Gyraldus remarks, That tho' Petrarch and *Boccace* (who were of the same Form for Poetry) did not shew much of Judgment and Accuracy in their *Poems* ; which indeed is chiefly to be ascrib'd to the unhappiness of the Age they liv'd in ; yet, says *Gyraldus*, they both seem to have very much of a *Poetical Genius*.

John Boccace, in the Preface to his *Genealogia Deorum*, says, That if any Man living be fit to undertake so great a Work, it is that most excellent Person, *Francis Petrarch*: A Man of a Divine Wit and a never-failing Memory, as also of admirable Eloquence ; who is most intimately acquainted with the Histories of all Nations ; and is incomparably well skill'd in explaining the *Fables* of the *Ancients* ; And, in a word, exactly knowing in all the several Parts of *Philosophy*.

Jacobus Philippus Tomasinus, in his Account of *Petrarch*, calls him, the Darling of the Muses, an Honour to the *Ancients*, the Delight of Learning, and one

Y who

who deserves a perpetual Memory.—This our Poet, says *Tomasinus*, had acquir'd so great a fame and reputation by his Works, that vast Numbers of Learned Men flock'd to him, just as Bees do to *Flowers*, to suck the *Hony*. And, indeed, what could be sweeter, or finer than the discourse of this our *Author*, who was so well skill'd in *Latin* and *Greek*, though more elegant in the *Italian*. *Petrarch*, says *Tomasin*, has two ways of attracting and moving his Reader, either by inculcating the Vertues, or else by Rhetorick and softness of Expression. In *Prose*, his Stile is Masculine and Nervous; and in *Verse*, says *Tomasin*, he is full, pure, elaborate, and yet suited to every Man's *Genius*. To conclude, he has in all parts wonderful Pleasantnes, and great Variety; his Sentences are beautiful, and his Words manly.
Tomasin. in *Petrarcha redivivo*, Cap. 1. and Cap. 8.

Paulus Vergerius, who writ the Life of *Francis Petrarch*, says, He was a Man of great Knowledge and Learning; and that there was scarce any sort of Learning, fit for a Gentleman, wherein he had not made some considerable Progress.—Of all the Works that *Petrarch* had wrote, *Vergerius* puts the highest Value upon his *Africa*; this Book, he tells us, is full of History, abounds with excellent Rules and Instructions, and contains a great many *Poetical Fictions*. He further observes, that *Petrarch* does therein appear to be well skill'd both in the Knowledge of *Antiquity*, and of *Nature*, and that there is a great deal of *Oratory* in it: In short, he tells us, That a *Young Man* might glory in being the Author of such a Work, and that an *Old Man* need not be ashame'd of it. Though, at the same time, he takes notice of his *Half Verses*, and his *Prosodia* faults: as also some Considerable Omissions in the History of the Second *Punick War*.

Rapin has a different opinion concerning the *Africa* of *Petrarch*; into what Enormities, says he, has *Petrarch* run in his *Africa*, through his Ignorance of Aristotle's Rules; and by his following no other Guide, but his own Genius, and Capricious Fancy. *Rap.* *Reflex.* on *Arist.* &c. Part I. Sect xi.

Vossius in his *De Poetis Latinis*, styles *Petrarch*, one of a Divine Wit, and Wonderful Learning.

Joannes Matthæus Toscanus, in his Account of *Italy*, Cap. v. tells us, That *Italy* never brought forth one that was equal to *Petrarch*, nay, nor any wise comparable to him.

Erasmus in *Ciceroniano*, pag. 155. calls *Petrarch*, one of a quick and ready Wit, a Man of great Knowledge, and no indifferent Orator. But as *Erasmus* observes, his *Latin* is not so pure as one could wish, his Style having a Tang of the preceeding Barbarous Age.

Paulus Manutius, in his *Comment* upon the first Book, and third Epistle of *Cicero* to his Brother *Quintus*, remarks, that *Petrarch* was the most Elegant of all the *Italian* Poets, but that he was no very good *Latin* Poet.

Joannes Gobellinus, in the Second Book of his *Commentaries*, concerning Pope *Pius II.* says, whom could we compare to *Franciscus Petrarcha*, if his *Latin* Works were as good as his *Italian*?

Titus Petronius Arbiter.

A Roman Knight, and an Elegant Writer in the time of Nero, to whom he was Master of the Revels.

His *Satyricon* mixt of *Prose* and *Verse* together, with several Fragments, is yet extant, though very much maimed and defective in many Places. At the taking of *Alba Græca* in the Year 1688. from the Turks, there was found the *Satyricon* of *Petronius*, said to be Perfect and Compleat, and afterwards publish'd by one *Francis Nodotius*, a French Gentleman, who is very positive in the asserting it to be Compleat and Perfect; but the truth of this is much question'd, by many of the most Learned.

St. Euremont observes in his *Miscellaneous Essays*, That in every part of *Petronius* there appears an admirable pure Stile, as also great delicacy of Thoughts; but that which he says, is most surprising to him, is to observe with what ease, and how ingeniously he gives us all sorts of Characters. Of all the Ancient Authors *Terence* is generally said to be the best, for hitting the Humours, and Tempers of men: But, says St. Euremont, There is this Objection to him, That he has not extent enough; And his whole Talent goes no further, than to give a true, and natural representation of a Servant, an O'd Man, a Covetous Father, a Debauch'd Son, or a Slave. This is the utmost of what *Terence* can do. You are not to expect from him any thing of Gallantry, or of Passion, or of the Thoughts, or Discourse of a Gentleman. But (now) *Petronius* had such an Universal Wit, that he understood the Genius of every Profession, and could turn himself to as many Humours and Tempers, as he had a Mind to. As for instance, if at any time he

he introduces one who is to *Declaim*, he would be sure to hit the Air and Style so exactly, that one would think he had us'd to *Declaim* all his Life. Never did any thing express more naturally, the Disorder of a Debauch'd life, than the Quarrels of *Eucolpion* and *Acylos* upon the Subject of *Giton*.—In a word, says St. Euremont, There is no Nature, no Temper, no Profession, which *Petronius* doth not admirably pursue the Genius of. He is a *Poet*, he is an *Orator*, he is a Philosopher, or any thing else, as he sees fit.

Mr. Richard Wooley, in the Second Vol. of his *Compleat Library*, Jan. 1692, pag. 101. says, that *Petronius* has the Character, as he was a Gentleman, and a *Roman Knight*, to have written in the most Gentleman-like Stile almost of any of that Nation, and with a free, flowing, and unaffected Eloquence, and with a Purity of Language that none in former times exceeded, nor in all things equall'd; nor in after-ages ever came nigh; not only the *Roman Eloquence*, but even the whole Body of that Language degenerating soon after into downright *Barbarism*,

The same Author pag. 143. acquaints us, That he hears from *Holland*, that some *Critical Remarks* are made by some sharp scented and smart Wits there, that seem to intimate that the late found Supplements of the *Satyricon* of *Petronius*, smell too strong of a *French Author*, to be the *Genuine Products* of *Petronius*; though they confess, they are so artfully composed, if *Fittitious*, that they will puzzle all the *Criticks* in the World to be positive in their Decisions about them. We shall only (says Wooley) mention Two of the Passages carried at, with the Exceptions made against them. First they doubt whether in *Petronius's* time, the Terms *Agens* and *Patiens* were used in an *Obscene Sence*, as in one

one of those Supplements : And. Secondly, in that expression found in pag. 23. *Adeo Sordidus erat Lycurgus, ut, Invitis opibus immensis, etiam quæ sunt vitæ necessaria, denegaret.* They incline to believe there is a *Gallicism*, as much Questioning whether the *Latins* ever us'd such a form of Speech, as to say, That a Covetous Man, *in spite of his great Riches*, grudges himself *Necessaries*.

Lipsius, lib. 1. *Lectionum Antiquarum*, cap. 8. says, that *Petronius* was a neat and an Elegant Writer ; and, were it not that his *Latin* is sometimes too good for his Wanton Subjects, in all other respects he deserves to be Recommended.

The same Author, lib. III. *Epistolicarum Quæstionum*, Epist. 2. tells *Petrus Pythæus*, There is not among all the Poets, a more Beautiful or more agreeable Piece, than *Petronius's Satyricon*. But at the same time he takes notice, of the danger there is in reading so *obscene* an Author ; though as for himself, he brags, he was one of those, upon whom such sort of *Obcene* Discourses made no more an Impression, than a *Boat* upon the *Sea*.

Gaspar Barthius, lib. 50. *Adversar* cap. 9. pag. 2357. remarks, that were it not for the *Obcenity* of *Petronius*, there never had wrote an Author of greater Beauty, or of greater Elegancy.

Petrus Daniel Huetius, in his *De Origine Fabularum Romanenſium*, pag. 76, 77. calls *Petronius*, the most Elegant and Polite Writer of the Age he liv'd in ; whose *Satyr* was full of Wit and Beauty. He also stiles him, a very great *Critick* ; and one of an exquisite taste in Learning ; but as *Huetius* observes, his Stile fell somewhat short of the Delicacy of his Judgment : For herein he seem'd to be too affected, and too Elaborate, his Style

Style degenerating from that *Natural* and *Venerable Simplicity*, which belong'd to the happy Age of *Augustus*.

Dryden, in his *Essay of Heroick Plays*, tells us, That *Petronius Arbiter*, was the most Elegant, and one of the most judicious Authors of the *Latin Tongue*; who had given many Admirable Rules for the Structure, and Beauties of an *Epick Poem*.

He further observes to us, in his *Dedic.* before *Examen Poeticum*, or, *The Third Part of Miscellany Poems*, that *Petronius* was the greatest Wit perhaps of all the Romans, yet when his Envy prevail'd upon his Judgment, to fall on *Lucan*, he fell himself in his Attempt: He perform'd worse in his *Essay of the Civil War*, than the Author of the *Pharsalia*: And, avoiding his Errors, says Dryden, has made greater of his Own.

Rapin, in the *Advertisement* to his *Reflexions of Aristotle of Poesie*, observes, That *Petronius* (who no Man of Modesty dares name, unless on the account of those Directions he gave for Writing) amongst the Ordures of his *Satyre*, gives certain Precepts for Poetry that are admirable. *Petronius* was disgusted at the Stile of *Seneca* and *Lucan*, which to him seem'd affected, and contrary to the Principles of *Aristotle*. 'Tis at them he levels with those Glances, that slip from him against the *Poetasters*, and *False Declamators*. Nothing more judicious was writ in those Days, yet (says Rapin) himself had not that easie and natural way, which he requires so much in Others. He gives the best Rules in the World against Affectation, which he never observed himself. For he commends even to the *Simplicity* of Style, whereas *his own* is not always *Natural*. To say the Truth, says Rapin, what is good on this Subject,
(viz.

(viz. his *Precepts for Poetry*) is all taken from Aristotle; who is the only Source whence good Sense is to be drawn, when one goes about to Write.

Mrs. Katherine Philips,

A Person of that admirable Merit, and Reputation that her Memory will be Honour'd of all Men, that are Favourers of Poetry. One, who not only has equall'd all that is reported of the Poetesses of Antiquity, the *Lesbian Sappho*, and the *Roman Sulpitia*, but whose Merit has justly found her Admirers, amongst the greatest Poets of our Age. This Incomparable Person, to the Regret of all, who were acquainted with her great Worth and Fame, died of the *Small-Pox* on the 22th. of June, 1664. being but One and Thirty Years of Age, having not left any of her Sex, her Equal in Poetry.

All her several Poems, together with her *Translations* of Monsieur Corneille's Tragedies of *Pompey* and *Horace*, and several other *Translations* out of French, are Printed in one Volume Fol. London, 1678.

The Publisher of Mrs. Philips's Works says, We might well have call'd her The *English Sappho*, she of all the Female Poets of former Ages, being for her Verses and her Vertues both; the most highly to be valued; but She has call'd her self *Orinda*, a Name that deserves to be added to the Number of the *Muses*, and to live with Honour as long as They. Were our Language as generally

rally known to the World as the *Greek* and *Latin* were Anciently, or as the *French* is now, her *Verses* could not be confin'd within the narrow limits of our *Islands*, but would spred Themselves as far as the *Continent* has Inhabitants, or as the *Seas* have any Shore.

What Opinion *Abraham Cowley* had of Mrs. *Katherine Philips*, appears by these following Verses:

Of Female Poets, who had Names of Old,
Nothing is shewn, but only told,
And all we hear of them, perhaps may be
Male-Flatt'ry only, and Male-Poetrie.
Few minutes did their Beauties Lightning wast, {
The Thunder of their Voice did longer last,
Bat that too soon was past.
The certain proofs of our Orinda's Wit
In her own lasting Characters are Writ,
And they will long my Praise of them survive,
Though long perhaps that too may live.
The Trade of Glory manag'd by the Pen,
Though great it be, and every where is found,
Does bring in but small profit to us Men,
'Tis by the number of the Sharers drown'd;
Orinda on the Female Coasts of Fame,
Ingrosses all the Goods of a Poetick Name.
She does no Partner with her see; {
Does all the business there alone, which we
Are forc'd to carry on by a whole Company. }
**Cowley's Third Stanza on the Death of
Mrs. Philips.**

The Earl of Orrery was also a high Admirer of the Famous *Orinda*, and particularly commends her *Trans-*
 Z *lation*

station of Corneille's Pompey, in these following Verses,
being part of a Copy Addrest to the Authress:

You English Corneille's Pompey with such Flame,
That you both raise our Wonder and his Fame ;
If he could Read it, he like us would call
The Copy greater than the Original :
You cannot mend what is already done,
Unless you'll finish what you have begun :
Who your Translation sees, cannot but say,
That 'tis Orinda's Work, and but his Play.
The French to Learn our Language now will seek,
To hear their Greatest Wit more nobly speak ;
Rome too would grant, were our Tongue to her known,
Cæsar speaks better int', than in his own.
And all those Wreaths once circl'd Pompey's Brow,
Exalt his Fame, less than your Verses now.

Dixxy:

Mrs. Philips's Horace Commended.

This Martial Story, which through France did come,
And there was wrought in great Corneille's Loom ;
Orinda's Matchless Muse to Brittain brought,
And Forreign Verse, our English Accents taught ;
So Soft, that to our shame we understand
They could not fall but from a Lady's Hand.
Thus while a Woman Horace did Translate,
Horace did rise above a Roman Fate.

Part of the Prologue.

Several others, as the Earl of Roscommon, Mr. Flatman, and my much esteemed Friend, James Terrell Esq; have

have also employ'd their Pens in praise of the Excellent
Orinda.

Pindarus,

A Theban Poet, chief of the Lyricks. He was Contem-
porary with *Aeschylus*, and began to Flourish
about the Seventy Sixth Olympiad. The Dialect he
us'd, was the Dorick, with a small mixture of the Ae-
lick.

His Odes are yet extant; besides which he is said to
have Written *Tragedies*, *Hymns*, *Pœans*, *Dithyrambs*, *E-
picks*, *Epigrams*, and other *Poems*, in all seventeen Di-
stinct Works.

He died about the 66. or, as some say, the 80. Year of
his Age, in the 86. Olympiad.

Pindar was so highly esteem'd by *Alexander*, that at
the overthrow of *Thebes*, he caused his House and Family
only to be preserv'd.

Diogenes Laertius tells us, that *Arcefilaus*, the Philo-
sopher, was wont to say of *Pindar*, That he fill'd the
Mouth with a noble Sound, and afforded a plentiful Vari-
ety of Names and Words.

Horace, lib. iv. *Odarum*, Od. 2. says, That no Man
could imitate, or come up to *Pindar*; and that whoe-
ver should attempt it, would certainly find himself as
much disappointed, as the bold *Icarus* in the *Fable*,
who undertaking to fly with Wings, whose Feathers
were fasten'd together with Wax, fell into the *Sea*, and
was drown'd.

He further adds, that *Pindar*, in respect of his Profound Eloquence, may very properly be resembl'd to a Torrent, or a Stream, that runs down with great violence from the top of a high Hill, and which the Rains have caus'd to swell, and to over-flow its Banks; and that one may as easily put a stop to the rapid Current of such a Stream, as to Circumscribe, or Limit *Pindar's* impetuous Style. To conclude, *Horace* is of the Opinion, That whatsoever this Divine Poet does, he still deserves New Laurels; that is to say, whether he fills his Lawless Dytherambicks with new Words, and that he does not tye himself to any Rule either in his Numbers, or Cadences, or, that he sings the Praises of the Gods, of Kings, or of Heroes.

Quintilian, lib. x cap. 1. says, That of all the Nine Lirick Poets, *Pindar* was beyond all dispute the most considerable, take him either for his Vast Genius, for the beauty of his Sentences and his Figures, for the abundance of his Thoughts, and the agreeable variety of his Expressions; and that in respect of his great Eloquence, which Flows like a Torrent, *Horace* might very well think it was impossible for any Man ever to imitate him.

Rapin, in his *Reflections* on *Aristotle's Book of Poesie*, part 2. sect. xxx. remarks, That *Pindar* is Great in his Designs, Vast in his Thoughts, bold in his Imaginations, Happy in his Expressions, and Eloquent in his Discourse: But (as *Rapin* observes) his great Vivacity hurries him sometimes past his Judgement, he gives himself too much Swing; his Panegyricks are perpetual Digressions, where, rambling from his Subject, he carries the Reader from Fable to Fable, from Allusion to Allusion, and from one Chimera to another; for he has the most unbridled and irregular Fancy in the World. But this Irregularity, says *Rapin*, is one part of the Character of the Ode,

the

the Nature and Genius of it requiring *Transport*. Pindar likewise is the only Person amongst the Greeks, that got any Reputation by this sort of Writing, for little is remaining of the other *Lyricks*.

Tanneguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgement of the Lives of the Greek Poets*, tells us, that the Figures which Pindar uses, are noble and great; but, that they have sometimes the Air of the *Dithyrambick*, that is to say, they are bold and rash, which is by no means agreeable to such as love a *Correct Style*. He adds, that Pindar is a grave and serious Author; but that he loves a little too much that which they call *Sentences*; that he very often loses his Subject, by Reason of his long Digressions; and that after he has been upon the Ramble, he returns all of a sudden, when one least expects him; and at his Re-entry, he never uses any thing of Ceremony, that is to say, he takes no manner of care, to make any Connection betwixt his first Thoughts, and that which is to follow.

Vossius, in his *De Arte Poeticâ*, pag. 24. says, That Pindar us'd to brag, that *Nature* was the only *Guide* he followed in *Poetry*; whereas others made use of *Art*, the Rules whereof he ne'er minded, nor regarded: In which respect, he was wont to compare himself to the *Eagle*, and other *Poets* to *Ravens*.

The same Author, lib. 2. *Institutionum Poeticarum*, pag. 75. observes, That Pindar took too much delight in *Metaphors*, and *Lofty Expressions*; but this fault, says Vossius, he ought to be pardon'd, since he thought it more glorious, to get now and then a fall, than to be always groveling upon the Ground.

The Lord Bacon, in his *Advancement of Learning*, lib. 8. cap. 1. takes notice, That to Pindar it is peculiar suddenly to strike, as it were, with a Divine Scepter, the Minds of Men by rare short Sentences.

And

And in his History of Life and Death, he calls *Pindar*, a Poet of a high Fancie, singular in his Conceits, and a great adorer of the Gods.

Gaspar Barthius calls *Pindar* an Ingenious Author, and one who had an indifferent good stock of Learning. lib. 39. *Adversar. cap. xiii.*

And *Vossius*, in his *De Hist. Lat. pag. 819.* declares, that he well enough approves of this Character given by the Learned *Barthius* concerning *Pindar*.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana 2.* remarks, That there is in *Pindar*, a great many Words not to be found any where else; but, that he sought not for them, but took them as they were then us'd, and as they naturally offer'd themselves; whereas *Nicander* and *Callimachus* made it their business, to hunt after the most obscure, and improper Words, to make use of.

Marcus Accius Plautus,

A Comical Poet, born at *Sarsina*, a City in Italy, who having spent all on *Players Apparel*, was fain for his living to serve a Baker in turning a Hand-Mill. At leisure hours he made his Plays. He died the first Year of the 149th. Olympiad, being 184 Years before Christ.

Several of his Works are lost, but we have yet remaining Twenty of his Comedies.

The Ancient Criticks could by no means agree, concerning the true Number of *Plautus's Comedies*; some reckoning them to be 21. Others 25. Others 40. nay, some advance them to 100. and some to 130. But the ground and occasion of this Difference, is generally thought to proceed from the mixing the Works of other *Comical Poets*, with those of this *Author*, and particularly the Comedies of one *Plautius*, whose Name being so very like that of *Plautus*, might very well be the Cause of such a Mistake.

Aulus Gellius, lib. vii. cap. 17. *Noct. Attic.* calls *Plautus*, the most Elegant of all the *Latin Authors*, and an absolute Master of that Language.

Varro was so taken with *Plautus*, that he says, if the *Muses* were to speak *Latin*, they would certainly use his very Stile.

Tully, in his first Book *De Officiis*, highly commends *Plautus's Ingenious and Facetious way of Raillery*.

Macrobius, in the Second Book of his *Saturnalia*, cap. 1. tells us, That the two most Eloquent Persons of all the *Ancients*, were *Plautus*, and *Tully*; and that these two excell'd all others in an Elegant way of Raillery.

Cardinal Bona, in his *Notitia Auctiorum*, calls *Plautus*, The Tenth Muse; The exact Rule of the Roman Language; and the Father of Eloquence.

Ludovicus Vives, in his *Comment upon St. Augustine's De Civitate Dei*, lib. 2. cap. 9. says, That no Poet had a greater Vogue than *Plautus*, not only in his own life time, but in the Age following.

And *Tanaquillus Faber*, in his Second Book, *Epist. 32.* styles *Plautus*, The very Fountain of pure *Latin*.

Liphius, in the Fisht Book of his *Epistolicæ Questiones*, Epift. 26. remarks, That among the Comical Poets none was to be preferr'd before *Plautus*; for in him we meet with not only purity of Stile, and Excellent Lan-guage; but he also affords us a great deal of Wit, Raillery, and pretty Conceits, besides that Attick Elegancy, which one may look for long enough in the rest of the *Roman Authors*, and never find.

Jacobus Crucius, in his third Book of *Epistles*, Epift. ad Francisc. Leeuvium, tells us, That never any thing was more pure, more elegant, and, in a Word, better skill'd in the *Latin Tongue*, than *Plautus*. So that if the *Muses* would have spoke *Latin*, they would (undoubtedly) have us'd *his Style*; all the Flower and Elegancy of the *Roman Language* being Comprehended in him. And, he further says, That as he must be a *Man of Parts*, who rightly understands the Elegancies of *Plautus*; so none but a *thick scul'd Block-head* will pretend to find fault with *Plautus*, who writes the best *Latin* of any of the *Roman Authors*. But yet, says *Crucius*, there is one thing you must be advertised of. Have a care, when you read *Plautus* and *Terence*, of propo-sing to your self to follow them in every thing. For they do sometimes make use of *Old, Obsolete Words*, which if you carry but one foot from the *Theater*, they'll not keep, but stink immediately.

Vossius, in the Fourth Book of his *Institut. Orator.* pag. 29. observes to us, That in *Plantus's time*, those *Archaisms*, or *Old Antique Words*, which we meet with in *this Poet*, were in no wise unbecomeing an *Orator*. For this was then the mode, or way of Speaking. But in *Cicero's Age*, the fashion was quite alter'd, and these *Old, Antique Words*, were wholly laid aside.

Rapin, in his *Reflex.* on Aristotle's Book of *Poesie*, part 2. sect. xxvi. says, That *Plautus* is ingenious in his Designs, happy in his Imaginations, fruitful in his Invention; Yet, that there are some Insipid Jests, that escape from him in the taste of *Horace*; and his good sayings that make the People laugh, make sometimes the honestest sort to pity him: 'Tis true, observes Rapin, he says the best things in the World; and yet very often he says the most wretched; this a Man is subject to, when he endeavours to be too witty; he will make laughter by extravagant Expressions, and *Hyperboles*, when he cannot be successful to make it by *Things*. *Plautus* is not altogether so regular in the Contrivance of his Pieces, nor in the Distribution of the Acts; but he is more simple in his Subjects; For the *Fables* of *Terence* are ordinarily Compounded, as is seen in the *Andria*, which contains two *Loves*. This is what was objected to *Terence*, that he made one *Latin Comedy* of two Greek, the more to animate his *Theatre*. But then the *Plots* are more naturally unravell'd, than those of *Plantus*; as those of *Plautus* are more natural than those of *Aristophanes*.

Erasmus, in the 28th. Book of his *Epistles*, Epist. 20. is of the Opinion, that there is more exact Judgment in one Comedy of *Terence*, than in the several Comedies of *Plautus*, put them all together.

Vossius, in the Second Book of his *Institutiones Poeticæ*, remarks, That *Plautus* has surpass'd *Terence*, not only in the variety of his Subjects, but also in his various Phrases. But yet he is of the Opinion of those, who think that many of *Plautus*'s *Jests* are flat and insipid; and that in his *Railleries* he is often cold and languid, nay sometimes obscene and ridiculous. And *Vossius* further tells us, that *Plautus* deserv'd not so

much Commendation as *Terence*, in that his aim and design was, to please the People in general, without any manner of distinction; whereas all that *Terence* desir'd, was, to gain the Approbation of Some Few, who were most considerable both for Wit and Honesty. *Vossius* also observes, That *Plautus* is neither so prudent, nor so exact as *Terence*, in that he introduces more than four Persons at once upon the Stage, all speaking at the same time; which is a thing never done by *Terence*. In a word, *Plautus* (says *Vossius*) has committed a great many faults upon all occasions, but particularly when he is to represent either the Characters of Persons, or the several Motions of different Passions.

Julius Scaliger, in his Third Book *De Poeticâ*, pag. 437. says, That the liberty which *Plautus* took ought to be noted: For he ventur'd at any thing, provided he could but move and affect his *Auditory*, either by making them laugh, or by introducing some *New Thing*, or Coining some *New Word*.

Hence therefore *Cælius Rhodiginus*, in the 13th. Book of his *Lectiones Antiquæ*, cap. 23. calls *Plautus*, a *Second Africa*, for that he does very often produce somewhat that is *New*, and also abounds with great *Misfortunes*.

Julius Scaliger, also in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, pag. 766. seems to be much dissatisfied with the the *Titles* of several of *Plautus's* Comedies; as for instance, the *Rudens*, he says, should rather have been call'd *Tempestas*; the *Trinummus*, which Word is but once us'd in all the whole Comedy, might more properly have been Entituled, *Thesaurus*; and the *Truculentus*, (which sounds great, and rather raises the Expectation, than answers it,) should with more reason have bore the Title of *Ruficlus*.

Sextus Aurelius Propertius,

A N Elegiac Poet, born at Mevania, a Town in Umbria, under the Reign of Augustus.

His four Books of *Elegies*, which is all that remains of him, are commonly publish'd with the Poems of *Catullus* and *Tibullus*. His Mistress, whom he makes the Subject of his Wit, was one *Hestia*, whom he calls *Cynthia*.

He was in great favour with *Cornelius Gallus*, and *Mecænas*. He died after *Virgil*, and before *Horace*.

Borrichius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. De Poetis*, pag. 52. says, That *Propertius*, as himself confesses, copy'd after *Philetas*, *Mimnermus*, and *Callimachus*, Greek Poets; and, as *Borrichius* observes, he was very happy in the imitating such noble *Originals*; though in one respect his *Verse* was somewhat defective, viz. in making his *Pentameter* generally end with a word of many *Syllables*. See even his very first *Distich*:

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis
Contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, That *Propertius* left four Books of *Elegies*, which are both Polite, and Learned. *Hofman*, in his *Lexicon*, calls *Propertius*, The chief (by far) of all the *Elegiac Poets*.

And *Quintilian*, lib. x. cap. 1. at the same time he so highly commends *Tibullus*, saith, There were yet Those who give *Propertius* the Preference.

Rolandus Maresius, in his Second Book, *Epiſt. 6.* says Tho' it may be thought a piece of Confidence in him to contradict that judicious Critick, *Quintilian*, who seems to prefer *Tibullus*; yet, for my part, *says he*, I own I am one of Those, who give the preference to *Propertius*. For although *Tibullus* be wonderfully Pleasant and Elegant, and much more correct in the *Latin Tongue*, than the other, (who often imitates the *Greek Poets*,) and is also more curious and exact in his *Verse*; yet *Propertius* seems to surpass him in Learning, and also in Sweetness of Temper, so very obliging and good Natur'd is he: But, as *Maresius* observes, though *Propertius* was of such a sweet, calm Temper, yet sometimes he expresses his Passions, with as much Heat and Vehemency, as the hottest Lover of them all.

Turnebus, in the Eleventh Book of his *Adversaria*, cap. 15. observes to us, That the *Verſes* of *Propertius* are so pleasant and delightful, that one would almost think, the Muses themselves dictated them to the Poet. Only, says *Turnebus*, I could wish, he had employ'd his most curious, fine Fancy, upon some other Subject, than that of *Love*; that so, he might be read by *Touth* with greater safety, than now he can.

Caspar Barthius, in the Ninth Book of his *Adversaria*, cap. x. remarks, That amongst all the *Ancients* there is not any Writer, that has a sweeter sort of Learning, nor (as he expresses it) a more Learned sort of Sweetness, than *Propertius*; which Author, says *Barthius*, the better you are acquainted with, the more you will love him: For even those things, which at first sight may seem the most obscure, will, after you have once search'd into them, by a certain natural beauty, appear to be the most delightful and agreeable.

The same Author, lib. 32. cap. 9. calls *Propertius*, a most Ingenious, a most Accurate, and a most Learned Writer; and one who was incomparably well skill'd in, as well as a true Lover of, the Greek Elegancies.

Lipsius, in the Second Book of his *Antiquæ Lectiones*, cap. x. tells us, That He who loveth not *Propertius*, can never be a Favourite of the *Muses*. For so great a Sweetness is there in his *Verses*, that, as the Comical Poet observes; *Nil nisi mulsa loquitur*, Every word in them seems to be mixt with Honey. And so full of Learning are they, that we are apt to think, says *Lipsius*, They were dictated even by *Apollo* himself.

Rapin, in his *Reflex.* on Aristotle's Book of *Poësie*, part 2d. sect. 29. says, That they who have writ Elegy best amongst the Latins, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. *Tibullus*, says *Rapin*, is Elegant and polite; *Propertius* noble and high; but *Ovid* is to be preferr'd to both; because he is more natural, more moving, and more passionate; and thereby he has better express'd the Character of *Elegy*, than the others.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poetica*, pag. 854. takes notice, That *Propertius* has an easie, natural Air; and that he has very well express'd the Character of *Elegy*; that in his Opinion, *Propertius* is more Polite and Elegant, than the *Criticks* generally allow him to be; tho' he must own, he did affect Things out of the Common Road.

He further observes, That *Propertius* was somewhat particular in the mixing *Fables* (upon every occasion) with his *Verse*, (he looking upon *Fable* to be the very Soul of Poetry,) tho' he did therein follow the same Counsel, which the famous *Corinna* once gave to *Pindar*. And in this respect is it, says *Vossius* in the third Book

Book of his *Institutiones Poeticae*, pag. 35. that *Propertius* had the advantage of *Tibullus*; because nothing adds more to the luster of an *Elegy*, than *Historical Stories* and *Fables*.

Lipsius, in the third Book of his *Variae Lectiones*, cap. vii. remarks, That there is a great deal of abstruse Learning in *Propertius*, and, that besides the Elegancy and Acuteness of his *Sentences*, there are many things even in his very *Words*, which deserve both our notice, and our praise. One thing indeed is very new, and I cannot tell, says *Lipsius*, whether the like can be found in any other Author, and that is, his peculiar way of using the *Simple Verbs* instead of the *Compounds*, and out of a strange Opinion of the *Elegancy*, giving the *Simple Verbs* the very same Signification, that the *Compound Verbs* ought to have; which he does often do. But to make the thing yet plainer, says *Liphius*, I will give you an example, or two. Thus you shall find in this Poet, the Verb *Sectari* us'd for *Insectari*; as also *Testari* for *Detestari*; which is contrary to all other Authors. And many other Instances of the like nature may be found in this Author; which whoever is ignorant of, says *Lipsius*, may happen often to be plung'd in reading *Propertius*.

Aurelius Prudentius Clemens,

A Christian Poet, Born at Saragosa a City in Spain, in the Year 348. He was at First by his Profession an Advocate, or Lawyer; but afterwards he was advanc'd by the Emperour Honorius to very considerable Preferment. When he was Fifty Seven Years of Age, he retir'd, and applied himself Chiefly to the Writing Divine Poems. There is no certain Account of his Death, tho' some pretend to say it was in the Year 412.

He Wrote in Latin Verse *Psychomachia*, *De Martyrum Coronis*, and some other Works which are yet Extant.

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, says, That Prudentius's Poems were Writ in several sorts of Verse: Whereby it plainly appears, that, considering the time he Liv'd in, he was the most to be valu'd of all the Christian Poets, not only for his Learned Figurative Expressions, but also for his Grave, and Weighty Sentences.

Sidonius Apollinaris, no Contemptible Author, (says Crinitus, makes no Scruple to joyn Prudentius to Horace.

Bellarmin, in his *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, says, That Prudentius Wrote Incomparable Verse.

Cardinal Bona, in his *Notitia Actorum*, calls Prudentius, The most sweet Christian Pindar, and in Allusion to his Name, The most Prudent Christian Poet.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* i. calls Prudentius, a good Poet.

And

And in *Scaligerana* 2. pag. 51. he Stiles him, an Elegant Poet.

Caspar Barthius, in the Eighth Book of his *Adversaria*, cap. 11. says, That never any Man Wrote more Diviney of Matters relating to the Christians, than *Prudentius*.

Vossius also, in his *De Historicis Latinis*, tells us, That *Prudentius* has done great Service to the Christian History, by what he has writ concerning the Sufferings of several *Martyrs*: 'Tis true, says *Vossius*, he wrote in Verse; but for all that, such as handle this Subject in Prose, are wont to fetch the true Matter of Fact from this our Poet.

Lilius Gyraldus assures us, That *Prudentius* was a Person of very great Learning, but of no Eloquence; which, as *Gyraldus* thinks, he altogether neglected; since the only thing he minded, was, the advancement of True, Christian Piety.

Caspar Barthius, in his 27th. Book of the *Adversaria*, cap. v. says, That *Prudentius* contains a Treasure of Curious, delicate Things, and that we ought not to pass him by, as a Common Ordinary Poet.

And the same Author, lib. 21. cap. 4. informs us, That the true reason, why *Prudentius* is less Elegant in some places than in others, was his imitating *Holy Writ*, and that then he did voluntarily alter his Style: But, that besides this, he was often forc'd to transcribe the Writings of the *Monks*, who generally wrote in a barbarous Style; and this was that, which chiefly occasion'd the breaking his Stile, and caus'd him to write otherwise, than else he would.

Hofman, in his *Lexicon*, tells us, That *Prudentius*, when he was 57 Years of Age, began to write in Verse concerning

concerning Ecclesiastical Matters, which he perform'd both Learnedly and Elegantly, unless it were, that sometimes, in Forreign words, and especially in the Greek, he minded not the Quantity of Syllables, when yet the Greek Inscriptions, or Titles of his Books, do plainly shew, that He understood Greek well enough.

Borrichius, in his *Dissert. Acad. De Poetis*, pag. 72. affirms, That *Prudentius*, for Eloquence, Piety, and Learning, transcended the Genius of the Age; and that his Verses, bating their false Quantities, are for the most part smooth, lofty, and Majestick.

Gaspar Scioppius, in his *Consultationes*, pag. 43. says, That *Prudentius* is (indeed) a tolerable Poet, but sometimes he is led away with the Custom of the Age; and at other times he runs too much upon old, Antique Words, and imitates *Lucretius* too much.

Ellies du Pin, in the Third Tome of his *New Bibliothèque of Ecclesiastical Authors*, remarks, That *Prudentius* is no very good Poët; that his Expressions are often Barbarous, and very different from that pure Style, which was us'd in the Age of *Augustus*. His Thoughts, or Notions, says *du Pin*, are Excellent, and altogether becoming a good *Christian*. There are some places Elegantly written, and pleasant enough to be read.

Renatus Rapin,

A Jesuite, born at Tours in France, 1621. A Critical Judge of the Poets, as appears by his *Reflexions on Aristotle's Treatise of Poetry*, and a Poet also himself of no Obscure Fame by his Latin Poem of *Horticulture or Gardening*, which hath been most ingeniously Translated into English, by my Kinsman, John Evelyn, the younger.

Dryden, in his *Apology for Heroick Poetry*, says, That Rapin, were all other Criticks lost, is alone sufficient to teach anew the Rules of Writing.

Oldham, in the *Advertisement* before his *Imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry*, tells us, That Rapin is one of the best Criticks, which these latter Ages have produc'd.

Rimer, in his Preface to Rapin's *Reflexions on Aristotle of Poesie*, informs us, That Rapin is as well known amongst the Criticks, as Aristotle to the Philosophers: Never Man gave his Judgment so generally, and never was Judgment (says Rimer) more free and impartial. He might be thought an Enemy to the Spaniards, were he not as sharp on the Italians; and he might be suspected to envy the Italians, were he not as severe on his own Country-Men.

Certainly, says Monsieur Baillet, in the *Jugemens des Scavans*, That Man must be altogether void of Common Sense, and also of that light which distinguishes a Man from a Beast, who can in the least question, whether Rapin was a great Poet, after he has once seen his *Eglogues*, his four Books of *Gardening*, his two

two Books of Heroick Poems, his Elegies, and his Odes.

Borrichius, pag. 117. tells us, That all the Eglogues of Rapin, both Sacred and Profane, were writ with exquisite Judgment.

Monsieur de la Roque, in the Journal des Scavans, Tome x. pag. 124. remarks, That although the Eglogues were not esteem'd the most considerable of Rapin's Poems, yet one might discern in them a certain Air of that secret and conceal'd loftiness, which Virgil has dispers'd in his Eglogues.

The same De la Roque, pag. 126. observes, That Rapin in his Elegies chose rather to take the Character of Ovid, than that of Tibullus or Propertius; because He is much more just in his Designs, and in his Relating Matters he is fuller of Circumstances; although the Other Two have written with greater Elegancy, and with an Air that is more harmonious, and more agreeable to Verse.

And as for his Odes, De la Roque tells us, That Rapin has mixt to some of his Heroick Subjects others that are soft and tender, that so he might follow both the Characters of that Kind, which are the Delicate and the Sublime.

And De la Roque, pag. 124, 125. of the same Journal, informs us, That Rapin in his Poem of Gardening, has excell'd himself. All the World, says he, owns, never any Man came so near Virgil, and that Rapin was the only Person, who could make us any amends, for what we might have expected, of this Kind, from the famous Virgil. Nay, De la Roque tells us expresly, that Rapin has the very Spirit of Virgil in his Idea's, in his Expressions, in his Figures, and particularly in his Transitions,

just as *Virgil* had imitated the *Transitions* of *Lucretius*, to express himself by.

Sallo d'Hedouville, in the *Journal des Scavans*, Febr. 9. 1665. is also a great Admirer of *Rapin's* Poem of *Gardening*. He tells us, that this Holy Father, *Rapin*, has so ingenious a way of mixing *Fable* to the most curious *Researches* of *Philosophy*; and that he has handled this Subject of *Gardening*, in so pleasant and agreeable a manner, that we have not now much reason to be concern'd, that *Virgil* had left his Work of the *Georgicks* imperfect in this particular, since we see *Rapin* hath so happily supply'd this Defect.

The German Criticks at *Lipstick*, in the *Acta Eruditorum*, Decemb. 1684. pag. 560 calls *Rapin*, a Person of most Exquisite Learning, and one that was wonderfully expert in reading Ancient Authors.

Monsieur de Segrais, in the Preface to his Translation of *Virgil*, says, That *Rapin* is not only a good Judge of Poetry, but also an Excellent Poet too.

The Earl of Rochester.

John Wilmot Earl of Rochester, Viscount Athlone in Ireland, and Baron of Adderbury in Oxfordshire, was Born at Ditchley near Woodstock in the said County, April — 1648. He Died in the Rangers Lodge in Woodstock-Park, on the 26th. of July, 1680.

Dr. Burnet, in his Account of the Life and Death of this Noble Lord, pag. 7, 8. says, He had a strange Vivacity

city of Thought, and Vigour of Expression: His Wit had a Subtlety and Sublimity both, that were scarce imitable. His Style was Clear and Strong: When he used Figures, they were very Lively, and yet far enough out of the Common Road: He had made himself Master of the Ancient and Modern Wit, and of the Modern French and Italian, as well as the English. He lov'd to Talk and Write of *Speculative Matters*, and did it with so fine a Thread, that even those who hated the Subjects that his Fancy ran upon, yet could not but be charm'd with his way of Treating of them. *Boileau* among the French, and *Cowley* among the English Wits, were those he admired most. Sometimes other mens thoughts mixt with his Composures, but that flow'd rather from the Impressions they made on him when he Read them, by which they came to return upon him as his own Thoughts; than that he servilely copied from any. For few Men ever had a bolder flight of Fancy, more steadily govern'd by Judgment, than he had; no wonder, says *Burnet*, a Young Man so made, and so improv'd, was very acceptable in a Court.

He laid out his Wit (pag. 14.) very freely in *Libels* and *Satyrs*, in which he had a peculiar Talent of mixing his Wit with his Malice, and fitting both with such apt words, that Men were tempted to be pleas'd with them: From thence his Composures came to be easily known, for few had such a way of tempering these together as he had; so that when any thing extraordinary that way came out, as a Child is Father'd sometimes by its Resemblance, so was it laid at his door, as its Parent and Author.

The *Anonymous* Writer of the *Preface* before *Valentini-an*, tells us, That what most of all deserves admiration in my Lord Rochester, was his Poetry, which alone is Subject enough for perpetual *Panegyrick*. But the Character
of

of it is so generally known; it has so Eminently distinguish'd it self from that of other men, by a Thousand irresistible Beauties; every Body is so well acquainted with it, by the effect it has had upon them, that to trace and single out the several *Graces*, may seem a Task as Superfluous, as to describe to a *Lover* the *Lines* and *Features* of his *Mistress's Face*. 'Tis sufficient to observe, that his *Poetry* like himself, was all *Original*, and has a Stamp so particular, so unlike any thing that has been Writ before, that as it disdain'd all Servile Imitation, and Copying from others, so neither is it capable (in the Opinion of this *Author*) of being Copy'd, any more than the manner of his Discourse could be Copy'd; the Excellencies are too many and too Masterly: On the other side, the Faults are few, and those inconsiderable; their Eyes must be better than Ordinary, who can see the Minute Spots, with which so Bright a Jewel is stain'd, or rather set off, for those it has, are of the kind, which, *Horace* says, can never Offend.

— *Quas aut incuria fudit;*
Aut humana parūm cavit Natura.

Such little Negligences as Humanity cannot be exempt from, and such as perhaps were necessary to make his Lines run Natural and Easie; for as nothing is more disagreeable either in *Verse* or *Prose* than a slovenly looseness of Style; so on the other hand too nice a Correctness will be apt to deaden the *Life*, and make the *Piece* too *Stiff*; between these two *Extreams*, is the just Character of my Lord Rochester's Poetry to be found.

Anthony Wood, in the second Volume of *Athenæ Oxonienses*, pag. 489. says, That *Andrew Marvell*, who was a good Judge of Wit, did use to say, That Rochester was the

the only Man in England, that had the true Vein of Satyr. He was (says Wood) a Person of most rare Parts, and his Natural Talent was Excellent, much improv'd by Learning and Industry, being throughly acquainted with all the *Classick Authors*, both *Greek* and *Latin*; a thing very rare (if not peculiar to him) among those of his Quality. He knew also how to use them, not as other Poets have done, to Transcribe and Steal from, but rather to better and improve them by his Natural Fancy.

But notwithstanding the many Excellencies of this *Noble Poet*, yet that which was no small Blemish to some of his *Poems*, was his *Immodest* and *Obscene Expressions*; since there is no sort of *Dress* does so ill become *true Poetry*, as that of *Obscenity*.

Here, as in all things else, is most unfit,
Bare Ribaldry, that poor pretence to Wit;
Such Nauseous Songs by a late Author made,
Call an unwilling Censure on his Shade.
Not that warm Thoughts of the Transporting Joy,
Can Shock the Chastest, or the Nicest Cloy;
But Obscene Words, too gross to move desire,
Like Heaps of Fewel do but choak the Fire.
On other Theams He well deserves our Praise,
But palls that Appetite he meant to raise.

Mulg. Essay on Poetry.

Jacobus

Jacobus Sannazarius, other- wife call'd Actius Sincerus,

BORN at Naples, Anno Dom. 1458. A Poet of very great Fame and Reputation for Latin Verse, gain'd by his Poem *De Partu Virginis*, his Piscatory Eclogues, Epigrams, &c. He died in the Year 1530.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* i. calls *Sannazarius*, a Poet of great Elegancy, one of an Excellent Invention, and who (as he tells us) is very well worth our Reading.

Boissardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illustrium*, says, That *Sannazarius* was, in respect of his great Elegancy and Learning, to be compar'd with any of the *Ancients*.

Ludovicus de la Cerda, in his Comment upon the 734th. Verse of the 7th. Book of *Virgil's Aeneids*, is of Opinion, That *Sannazarius* did not only surpass all the Poets of his time, but also, that he contributed more to the Glory and Reputation of the City of Naples, than ever *Statius Papinius* did formerly.

Borrichius, in his *Dissertationes Academicæ de Poetis*, pag. 105. tells us, That *Sannazarius*, of Naples, carried the Latin Poesie to a great height; and that in respect of nobleness of fancy, as also for imitating the Best of the *Ancients*, for Poetical Fictions, and for Acuteness, there have been scarce Any since his time, who have gone beyond him. He says, that *Sannazarius* lies buried at *Pausilypum* (about three Miles from Naples) close by *Virgil*; it being but reasonable, that as they were Men of

of equal Skill, and who affected the very same sort of Learning, so even in their *Graves* they should not be at any great distance, one from the other.

He further remarks, That never any thing was more Correct than *Sannazarius's Verse*, as appears by that most Excellent Epick Poem of his, *De Partu Virginis*, compris'd in three Books. In a word, says *Borrichius*, there is nothing that *Sannazarius* has writ, but what very well deserves to be read, and that with the greatest Attention, by all who study and affect Poetry; so incomparably well does he write upon any Subject: To conclude, his *Eclogues* are polite; his *Elegies* are easie and run well; and his *Epigrams* are Ingenious, and without any force, or constraint.

Erasmus, in *Ciceroniano*, pag. 205. says, That *Accius Sincerus* was wonderfully happy in his Poem *De Partu Virginis* for which he receiv'd prodigious Applause from the *Roman Theatre*; and that even two *Popes*, viz *Leo x.* and *Clement 7th* had (each of Them) writ him a Letter of Complements, to congratulate him thereupon.

In this resp. &c, says *Erasmus*, is *Accius Sincerus* to be preferr'd before his Predecessor *Pontanus*, for that he did not think much, to spend some part of his time in treating upon *Sacred Matters*, which Subject he handl'd neither carelessly, nor unpleasantly. But yet, says *Erasmus*, in my Opinion, he would have deserv'd more Commendation, had he shew'd a little more Devotion, upon so Sacred, and so Divine a Subj. &c.

Erasmus, in the same place, pag. 206. remarks, That this Poem *De Partu Virginis* has lost much of it's Beauty, (which otherwise it might have had) by a too frequent use of *Synalæpha's*. And, in Conclusion, he adds, That the whole Poem in general, was fitter for a Young Man, who had a mind to try what he could do in

Poetry; than for a grave, serious, and Religious Person, who really intended any Service to the Publick; And therefore Erasmus says, in this respect, he prefers that one *Hymn* of Prudentius *De Natali Jesu*, before those three little Books of Accius Sincerus.

Rapin, in his *Reflexions* on Aristotle's Treatise of *Poësie*, part 1. sect. 32. observes to us, That *Sannazarius* has some touches of the noble *Air* of *Virgil*, but not many; that he has only copy'd *Virgil's Phrases*, without expressing his *Spirit*; and that whenever he strains himself, to come up to *Virgil*, he soon falls and returns again to his own *Genius*; and, in a Word, amidst the vain *Efforts* of a *Servile imitation*, there continually escape from him some *Strokes* of his own Natural *Spirit*.

The same Author, part 2. sect. xvi. of those *Reflexions*, tells us, That *Sannazarius*, who was famous among the *Italian Poets* for his Poem *De Partu Virginis*, had a good *Genius* for writing in *Latin*; for the *purity* of his *Style* is admirable; but the *Contrivance* of his *Fable* has no *delicateness*, nor is his *Manner* any wise proportionable to the dignity of his *Subject*.

And in his *Thirteenth Section* of this *Second Part* of his *Reflexions*, he takes notice, That *Sannazarius*, in his Poem *De Partu Virginis*, has judiciously mingl'd the *Fables* of *Paganism*, with the *Mysteries* of *Christian Religion*.

Paulus Jovius, in his *Elogies of Learned Men*, says, That *Sannazarius's Poem*, *De Partu Virginis*, took him up no less than *Twenty Years* time the *Composing*; and that at last he was mightily disappointed, since his *Piscatory Eclogues*, which he made in his Youth, quite eclips'd the glory of this and all his other Works too.

Lilius Gyraldus, notwithstanding he highly commends *Sannazarius*, for his Diligence, his Exactness, his Solid Judgment, and his great skill in Poetry; yet he cannot but blame him, for having spent so much of his time, upon this one Poem, *De Partu Virginis*; which by his so often filing and altering, instead of making it better, he (really) made it worse, as *Gyraldus* thought.

Sappho,

A N Excellent Poetess, born in the Isle of *Lesbos*; She was call'd *The Ninth Lyrick*, and *The Tenth Muse*. She wrote *Epigrams*, *Elegies*, *Jambicks*, *Mondies*, and nine Books of *Lyrick Verses*; and was the Inventress of that kind of Verse, which from her is call'd the *Sapphick*; she attain'd to no small Applause in her Contention, first with *Stesichorus*, and then with *Alcaeus*. According to *Calvisius*, *Sappho* flourish'd in the time of *Nabonassar*, in the Year of the World, 3341. about six Hundred and seven Years before Christ. She wrote in the *Aeolick Dialect*.

Some tell us, there were Two of this Name, who liv'd in the same Country, and at the same time, and both of them *Poetesses*. But *Ovid*, *Statius*, and others of the *Latin Poets*, acknowledge but one *Sappho*; in memory of whom the *Romons* erected a most Noble Statue of *Porphyry*; And the Citizens of *Mitylene*, the Chief City of the Island *Lesbos*, had so great an honour for

her Memory, that they caus'd her *Image* to be *Stamp*t upon their *Coin*.

Vossius, in the third Book of his *Institutiones Poeticæ*, pag. 78, and 97. says, That none of the Greek Poets excell'd *Sappho* for sweetness of Verse; and that She made *Archilochus* the Model of her Style; but at the same time, she took great care, to soften, and sweeten that sharp Style of his.

Rapin, in his *Reflex.* on *Aristotle's Treatise of Poësie*, part 2. sect. 30. tells us, It may be avow'd by that which is left us of the Fragments of *Sappho*, that *Demetrius* and *Longinus* have great reason to boast so highly in their Works, of the admirable *Genius* of this *Woman*; for there are found some *Strokes* of *Delicacy* the most *fine*, and the most *passionate* in the World.

The Authors of the *Athenian Mercury*, Vol. v. Numb. 13. Quest 8. remark, That the Fragment consisting but of a few Lines, which we have of *Sappho's*, carries something in it so *Soft*, *Lushious* and *Charming*, even in the sound of the Words, that *Catullus* himself, who has endeavour'd somewhat like 'em in *Latin*, comes infinitely short of 'em; And so have all the Rest, who have writ their own Thoughts on that Subje~~ct~~.

Monsieur *Bayle*, in his *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, Novemb. 1684. pag. 396. says, Never were two Persons in this World so much of a Temper, as *Sappho* and *Anacreon*; and both of them the most *Amorous* Creatures in Nature. 'Tis a Thousand pities, says *Bayle*, that they did not live at the same time, as *Mademoiselle de Scudery* (very much to the advantage of her *Romance*) supposes they did: If they had, (says *Bayle*,) they ought to have been *Husband* and *Wife*, that so the World might have seen, what would have been the *Effe~~c~~t*,

Effect, of Two such loving Tempers, and such Delicate Souls.

He also observes, that They are so much alike in their way of Writing, that it is somewhat difficult to distinguish the One from the Other.

Hofman, in his Lexicon, tells us, Some Authors are of Opinion, that the Elegy which Ovid made under the name of Sappho, and which is infinitely beyond his other Elegies, was all, or at least the most Beautiful Part of it, stole from the Poems of the Elegant Sappho.

Lucius Annæus Seneca,

BORN at Corduba in Spain, both Philosopher and Poet, and Uncle to Lucan. He died Anno Domini, 65. or, as others say, 68.

There are ten Latin Tragedies, which generally go under his Name, viz. Hercules Furens; Thyestes; Thebais; Hippolytus; Oedipus; Troades; Medea; Agamemnon; Hercules Oetaeus; and Octavia.

Monsieur Baillet tells us, That of all the Ten Latin Tragedies, which are Collected, and Publish'd in a body, under the Name of Seneca, it is generally agreed, that the best of them were writ by this famous Philosopher, Nero's Tutor, and that He was (really) the Author of the Medea, the Hippolytus, and the Troades. The Rest, says Baillet, have their Excellencies, and are to be valued; although it is not yet well known, by whom they were writ. But no body, says he, denies, but the

the meanest, and that which seems the most unworthy the Name of *Seneca*, is the *Oktavia*; to which others joyn the *Thebais*, which is the Work of a *Disclaimer*, who did not understand what belong'd to *Tragedy*.

Vossius, in his *De Poetis*, places *Seneca* among the *Poets*; tho' at the same time he tells us, He did not look upon him to be the Author of all those several *Tragedies*, which we commonly see ascrib'd to him. But yet, says *Vossius*, There is no doubt to be made, but some of them were really his.

To the same Effect says *Borrichius*, pag. 56. Tho' the Learned are not agreed, that all the several *Tragedies*, which come out under the Name of *Seneca*, may justly be attributed to him; yet they are generally inclin'd to think, that the far greatest part of those *Tragedies* were writ by him.

The same *Borrichius* also tells us, That *Seneca* writ in a pure Tragical Strain, shewing a decent Gravity; and that he was no ways inferior to any of the Greeks, either for a Majestick Stile, or for an exquisite way of expressing himself.

Lipsius could by no means believe, That *Seneca* ever wrote the *Troades*; he had so mean an Opinion of this *Tragedy*, that he gave it for granted, it was writ either by some little, paltry Poet, or else by some ignorant Pedant.

But *Joseph Scaliger* was much offend'd at this severe Censure of *Lipsius*, from whom he entirely differ'd, calling this *Tragedy*, *A Divine Work*, and to be preferr'd before any of the other Nine, all which he believes were writ by *Seneca*.

Joseph Scaliger also, in *Scaligeriana* i. says, That *Seneca* the Poet is a good Author; but, that we are not to

to expect from him that exactnes, which the Rules of the *Old Tragedy* requir'd.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, pag. 839. tells us, That for a lofty Majestick sort of Verse, *Seneca* came not behind the best of the Greek Poets; nay, that he excell'd *Euripides* in Politeness and Beauty. It must be own'd, says *Scaliger*, that Invention (indeed) is the peculiar property of the Greeks; but *Seneca's* is not beholden to them, for that lofty Air, that harmonious sound, that smart Wit, and that briskness of Fancy, which every where abounds in him. But yet, he adds, that, whenever *Seneca* has a mind to imitate *Sophocles*, he is very unfortunate, and has no luck at it.

Rapin, in the first part of his *Reflexions* on *Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie*, sect. 25. remarks, That *Seneca* knows nothing of the *Manners*. He says, He is a fine Speaker, who is eternally uttering pretty Sayings, but is in no wise *Natural* in what he speaks, and whatever Persons he makes to speak, they always have the Meen of *Actors*.

The same Author, in the Second part of these *Reflexions*, sect. 22. observes, That *Seneca's* Verse are pompous, his Thoughts lofty, because he would dazzle; but the Contrivance of his *Fables* are of no great Character. This Author (says *Rapin*) pleases himself too much in giving his own *Idea's*, instead of *real Objects*; and he represents not always very regularly, what is to be represented.

St. Euremont, in his *Miscellaneous Essays*, says, He does much more esteem the Person of *Seneca*, than the Works of *Seneca*. I have a great respect, says he, for the Tutor of *Nero*, the Gallant of *Agrippina*, and for that Ambitious Man who pretended to the *Empire*: Of the *Philosopher*, and *Writer*, I make but little account, and am

am affected neither with his Stile, nor his Thoughts. His *Latin* has nothing of resemblance to that of *Augustus's* time ; it is neither easie, nor natural ; all made up of Points, all fanciful and conceited ; more of the heat of *Africa*, or *Spain* in them, than the Beauty of *Greece* or *Italy*. You see *there* abrupt things, that have indeed the Air and Shape of Sentences ; but which have neither their Solidity, nor their good Sence : Which whet and spur on the *Fancy*, without gaining the *Judgment*. His forced Discourse (*says St. Euremont*) Communicates to Me a sort of Constraint ; and the Soul, instead of finding *there* its Satisfaction and Repose, meets with Trouble and Affliction.

Nero, tho' one of the most Wicked Princes of the World, was yet very Ingenious, and had near him a sort of *Under-Masters*, extreamly curious, who us'd *Seneca* as a *Pedant*, and turn'd him into *ridicule*. I am not, *says St. Euremont*, of the Opinion of *Berville*, who imagin'd that the false *Eumolpus* of *Petronius* was the true *Seneca*. If so be *Petronius* would have given him an injurious Character, it had been under the Person of a *Pedantick Philosopher*, rather than an *impertinent Poet*. Besides, 'tis as it were impossible to find any Agreement therein.

Seneca was the Richest Man in the Empire, and always commended Poverty. *Eumolpus*, a Poet very low in the World, and in the despair of his Fortune, he complain'd of the Ingratitude of the Age, and found no other Comfort than that *bonæ Mentis soror est Paupertas*. If *Seneca* had Vices, he conceal'd them with Care under the appearance of Wisdom : *Eumolpus* was so vain as to shew *his*, and us'd his Pleasures with much liberty.

I don't apprehend then (*says St. Euremont*) upon what *Berville* could ground his Conjecture. But I am deceiv'd, *says*

says he, if all that Petronius says of the Style of his time, of the Corruption of Eloquence and Poetry, if the *Controversiae sententiis vibrantibus pietæ*, which offended him so much, if the *Vanus sententiarum Strepitus*, wherewith he was astonish'd, doth not belong to *Seneca*, if the *per Ambages & Deorum Ministeria, &c.* did not relate to the *Pharsalia* of *Lucan*: If the Encomiums, which he gives to *Cicero*, *Virgil*, and *Horace*, were not design'd in Contempt of the Uncle, and Nephew. Be it as it will, to return to what appears to Me (says St. Euremont) concerning *Seneca*, - I never read his Writings, without being of quite contrary Sentiments to those which he would inspire his Readers with. If he attempts to persuade Poverty, I long for his Riches; his Virtue frightens me, and the least dispos'd to Vice would abandon himself to Pleasures, by the description he gives of them. In a Word, he speaks so much of Death, and leaves me such Melancholy Idea's, that I do my utmost Endeavours not to improve by his Lecture. The finest Things in his Works, are the Examples and Citations he mingles therein. As he liv'd in a curious Court, and knew a thousand fine Things that occurr'd in All Ages, he produces some that are very agreeable; sometimes of the Greeks, sometimes of *Cæsar*, *Augyulus*, and *Mecænas*; for after all, his Parts and Knowledge were infinite: But his Style, says St. Euremont, has nothing that affects me; his Opinions are too severe: And 'tis ridiculous that one who liv'd in abundance, and was so careful of himself, should encourage nothing but *Poverty* and *Death*.

William Shakespear,

ONE of the most Eminent Poets of his Time ; He was Born at *Stratford upon Avon* in *Warwickshire*, and flourish'd in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth, and King James the First. He died on the 23d of April 1616. in the 53d. Year of his Age.

He has Writ about Forty Six Plays, all which except Three, are Bound in one Volume in Folio, Printed at London, 1685.

Gerard Langbaine, in his Account of the *English Dramatick Poets*, says, That *Shakespear's* Natural Genius to Poetry was so Excellent, that like those *Diamonds*, which are found in *Cornwall*, Nature had little, or no occasion for the Assistance of Art to polish it. The truth is, 'Tis agreed on by most, that his Learning was not extraordinary ; And I am apt to believe, (*says Langbaine*) that his skill in the *French* and *Italian* Tongues, exceeded his knowledg in the *Roman Language*. Few Persons that are acquainted with *Dramatick Poetry*, but are convinced of the Excellency of his Compositions, in all Kinds of it. *Langbaine* tells us, for his part he esteemt *Shakespear's* Plays beyond any that have ever been Publish'd in our Language : And though he extreamly admires *Johnson*, and *Fletcher*; yet (*says he*) I must still aver, that when in Competition with *Shakespear*, I must apply to them, what *Justus Lipsius* Writ in his Letter to *Andræas Schottus*, concerning *Terence* and *Plautus*, when Compar'd; *Terentium amo, admiror, sed Plautum magis.*

Edward Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, calls *Shakespear*, The Glory of the *English Stage*; whose Nativity at

at Stratford upon Avon, is the highest Honour that Town can boast of; from an Actor of Tragedies and Comedies, he became a Maker; and such a Maker, says Phillips, that though some others may perhaps pretend to a more exact Decorum and Oeconomie, especially in Tragedy, never any express a more Lofty and Tragick height; never any represented Nature more purely to the Life; And where the Polishments of Art are most wanting, as probably his Learning was not extraordinary, he pleases with a certain Wild and Native Elegance.

Dryden tells us, in his *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, pag 33, 34. That Shakespear was the Man who of all Modern, and perhaps Ancient Poets, had the largest and most Comprehensive Soul. All the Images of Nature were still present to him, (says Dryden) and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily; when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted Learning, give him the greater Commendation: He was Naturally Learned; he needed not the Spectacles of Books to Read Nature; he look'd inwards, and found her there. I cannot (says Dryden) say, he is every where alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of Mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his Comick Wit degenerating into Clenches; his serious swelling into Bombast. But he is always great, when some great Occasion is presented to him: No Man can say he ever had a fit Subject for his Wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of Poets,

Quantum lenta solent inter viburna Cupressi.

The consideration of this (as Dryden observes) made Mr. Hales of Eaton say, That there was no Subject of
D d 2 which

which any Poet ever Writ, but he would produce it better done in *Shakespear*; and however others are now generally preferr'd before him, yet the Age wherein he liv'd, which had Contemporaries with him, *Fletcher* and *Johnson*, never equal'd them to him in their esteem: And in the last Kings Court, when *Ben's* Reputation was at highest, *Sir John Suckling*, and with him the greater part of the *Courtiers*, set our *Shakespear* far above him.

Dryden, in his *Preface* to *Troilus and Cressida*, remarks, That the *English Tongue* in general is so much refin'd since *Shakespear's* time, that many of his *Words*, and more of his *Phrases*, are scarce intelligible. And of those which we do understand, some are ungrammatical, others course; and his whole Style (says *Dryden*) is so pester'd with *Figurative Expressions*, that it is as affected as it is obscure. 'Tis true, that in his latter Plays he had worn off somewhat of the Rust.

'Tis one of the Excellencies of *Shakespear*, says *Dryden*, in the said *Preface*, that the *Manners* of his Persons are generally apparent; and you see their bent and Inclinations. *Fletcher* comes far short of him in this, as indeed he does almost in every thing: There are but glimmerings of *Manners* in most of his *Comedies*, which run upon *Adventures*: And in his *Tragedies*, *Rollo*, *Otto*, the *King* and *No King*, *Melantius*, and many others of his best, are but Pictures shewn you in the *Twi-light*; you know not whether they resemble *Vice*, or *Virtue*; and they are either *Good*, *Bad*, or *Indifferent*, as the present Scene requires it. But of all Poets (says *Dryden*) this Commendation is to be given to *Ben. Johnson*, that the *Manners* even of the most inconsiderable Persons in his *Plays* are every where apparent.

The Characters of Fletcher are poor and narrow, (says Dryden) in Comparison of Shakespear's; I remember not one which is not borrow'd from him; unless (says Dryden) you will except that strange mixture of a Man, in the King and No King: So that in this part Shakespear is generally worth our Imitation; and to imitate Fletcher (says Dryden) is but to Copy after him who was a Copyer.

Dryd. Ibid.

If Shakespear were stript of all the Bombast in his Passions, and dress'd in the most Vulgar Words, we should still find the Beauties of his Thoughts remaining; if his Embroideries were burnt down, there would still be Silver at the bottom of the Melting-Pot. Dryden.

Ibid.

Tate, who alter'd Shakespear's Richard the Second, tells us, There are some Master-Touches in this Play, that will vye with the best Roman Poets.

All this together yet is but a part
Of Dialogue, that great and powerful Art,
Now almost lost, which the Old Grecians knew,
From whence the Romans fainter Copies drew, }
Scarce comprehended since but by a Few.
Plato and Lucian are the best Remains
Of all the Wonders which this Art contains;
Let to our selves we justice must allow,
Shakespear and Fletcher are the Wonders now:
Consider them, and Read them o're and o're,
Go see them Play'd, then Read them as before;
For tho' in many things they grossly Fail,
Over our Passions still they so prevail,
That our own Grief by theirs is rock'd asleep;
The Dull are forc'd to feel, the Wise to weep.

Mulg. Essay on Poetry.

How

How defective Shakespear has been in his *Plots*, Rimer has at large discover'd in his *Criticisms*.

Sir Philip Sidney,

SON to Sir Henry Sidney, thrice Lord Deputy of Ireland, and Sisters Son to Robert Earl of Leicester, was Born at Penshurst in the County of Kent, in the Year 1554. Bred at Christ-Church in Oxford. He was a Gentleman of great Accomplishments, and of a Sweet Nature. His Parts so endear'd him to Queen Elizabeth, that she sent him upon an Embassy to the Emperour of Germany at Vienna, which he discharg'd to his Honour, and her Approbation : Yea, his fame was so renown'd throughout all Christendom, that (as it is commonly reported) he was in Election for the Kingdom of Poland; though the Author of his *Life*, Printed before his *Arcadia*, doth doubt of the Truth of it. He was at last made Governor of Flushing. But most unfortunately, in the very prime of his Years, he was wounded with a Shot, in a small Skirmish before Zutphen, on the 22d. of September, 1586. of which he Died, on the 16th. of October following.

He Wrote a Famous Piece, call'd his *Arcadia*; as also *A Defence of Poesie*; and a Book Intituled *Astrophel and Stella*, with divers Songs and Sonnets in praise of his Lady, whom he Celebrated under that Bright Name. He also Translated part of that Excellent Treatise of Philip Morney du Plessis, of the Truth of the Christian Religion.

Dr.

Dr. Fuller, in his *Worthies of England*, says, That Sir Philip Sidney was so Essential to the English Court, that it seem'd maim'd without his Company, being a Compleat Master of Matter and Language, as his *Arcadia* doth evidence.

Cambden, in his *History of Queen Elizabeth*, calls Sir Philip Sidney, A Person of great Virtue, Excellent Wit, most exquisite Learning, and one of a Sweet Temper.

The same Author, in his *Britannia*, says, That God therefore sent Sir Philip Sidney into the World, even to shew unto our Age a Sample of Ancient Virtues.

Grotius, in his *Annals of the Netherlands*, says, That the Battel at Zutphen prov'd fortunate enough to the English, had it not been sullied by the Death of Sir Philip Sidney, a Young Gentleman, Born with the greatest Advantages that could be; and who had honour'd the Nobility of his Birth, by the true Splendor of all Beautifying Learning.

Lipsius Dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney his Dialogue *De Rectâ Pronunciatione Latinæ Linguae*, and hath this Passage in his Epistle, O Britanniæ tuæ clarum fidus, cui certatim lucem affundunt Virtus, Musa, Gratia, Fortuna.

Speed, in his *Chronicle*, calls Sir Philip Sidney, That Worthy Gentleman, in whom were Compleat all Virtues and Valours, that could reside in Man.

Dr. Heylin, in his Description of *Greece*, says, That Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*; besides its Excellent Language, rare Contrivances, and Deleitable Stories, hath in it all the Strains of *Poesie*, Comprehendeth the whole Art of Speaking; and to them who can discern and will observe, affordeth notable Rules for Demeanour, both private and publick.

Sir

Sir William Temple, in his *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 33. observes, That the true Spirit or Vein of *Ancient Poetry*, under the Name of *Romance*, seems to shine most in Sir Philip Sidney, whom, he says, he esteems both the greatest Poet, and the Noblest Genius of any that have left Writings behind them, and Publish'd in ours, or any other Modern Language; A Person Born Capable not only of Forming the greatest Idea's, but of Leaving the Noblest Examples, if the length of his Life had been equal to the Excellence of his Wit, and his Virtues.

Edward Leigh, in his *Treatise of Learning and Learned Men*, tells us, that the same thing may be said of Sir Philip Sidney, as Austen said of Homer, That he is very Sweet and Delightful even in his Vanities. Yet he was not so fond of his *Arcadia*, as the Bishop *Heliodorus* of his *Amorous Book*; for he desir'd when he Died (having first Consulted a Minister about it) to have had it suppress'd.

Nat. Lee, in his *Epistle Dedicatory to Philip Earl of Pembroke*, before *Cæsar Borgia*, says, That he Challenges all the Men of Fame to show an Equal to the Immortal Sidney, one who was so most Extravagantly Great, that he refus'd to be a King. He was at once a *Cæsar* and a *Virgil*, the *Leading Soldier*, and the *Formost Poet*.

'Tis generally reported, that Sir Phillip Sidney, in the extream Agony of his Wounds, earnestly desir'd an Intimate Friend of his, to Burn his *Arcadia*; but what Answer his Friend made, is uncertain: However this gave occasion for the ensuing *Epigram*:

*Ipse tuam moriens (sed Conjuge teste) jubebas
Arcadiam sœvis ignibus esse Cibum:
Si meruit mortem, quia Flammam accendit Amoris,
Mergi, non Uri debuit iste Liber.*

*In librum quæcunq; cadat Sententia: Nullâ
Debuit Ingenium morte perire tuum.*

Sophocles,

A Tragick Poet, Born at Athens the Second Year of the Seventy First Olympiad. He Died in the 95th. Year of his Age, Six Years after Euripides. He was called *The New Syren*, *The Flower of Poets*, and the *Bee*, from the sweetnes of his Speech. He is said to have Written 120, or as others tell us, 123 *Tragedies*, of which Seven only are Extant, viz. *Ajax Flagellifer*, *Eleætra*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Antigone*, *Trachiniae*, *Philoctetes*, and *Oedipus Coloneus*. He is said to have been *Victor* Four and Twenty times. And as *Valerius Maximus* informs us, the last time he came off *Victor*, he so little expected it, that he died with the very Joy; but *Lucian* tells us, he was choak'd with a *Grape-Stone*. He added much to the perfecting *Tragedy*, in which he was far more exact, than either *Thespis* or *Eschylus*, that went before him. He increas'd the Number of the *Chorus* from *Twelve* to *Fifteen*. Hence therefore *Boileau* gives him this following Character:

*Then Sophocles, the Genius of his Age,
Increas'd the Pomp, and Beauty of the Stage,
Ingag'd the Chorus Song in every part,
And Polish'd rugged Verse by Rules of Art :*

*He, in the Greek, did those Perfections gain,
Which the weak Latin never could attain.*

Boileau's Art of Poetry.

Cicero, in *Catone Majore*, relates, That *Sophocles*, who liv'd to a very great Age, did to the very last continue his Writing *Tragedies*; which was the occasion of his Sons making their Complaint to the *Judges* against him; setting forth, that the good Old Man, their Father, did so wholly apply himself to this sort of Study, that he ne're minded the concerns of his Family; And therefore they Petition'd, that they would please to assign to him, as being *non Compos Mentis*, a Guardian to look after the Estate. But assoon as the *Old Gentleman* heard this, he Immediately produc'd his *Oedipus Coloneus*, (which he had Writ but a little before) reciting it to the *Judges*, and then ask'd them, whether they thought, a Man who had lost his Senses, could ever be the Author of the same? Whereupon the *Judges* presently dismiss't the *Cause*, and sent away the Sons with a Flea in their Ears.

Tully, in his Second Book *De Divinatione*, calls *Sophocles*, A Divine Poet.

How great an esteem *Virgil* had for this Author, appears by his *Eglogue 8. verse the 10th.*

Sola Sophocleo tua Carmina digna Cothurno.

Whereby *Virgil* does in a particular manner distinguish *Sophocles* from all the other *Tragick Poets*.

Rimer, in his *Short View of Tragedy*, pag. 158. remarks, That at *Athens* (as it is reported) the *Tragedies* of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, were Enroll'd with their Laws, and made part of their *Statute-Book*.

Longinus,

Characters and Censures. 211

Longinus, in his Book *περὶ ψῆφος*, observes, That *Sophocles* had an excellent faculty, in giving the true and natural Description of things.

Quintilian, lib. 10. cap. 1. tells us, That *Sophocles* had wonderful skill in moving the Passions; and that his particular Talent lay, in exciting Compassion.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 2. calls *Sophocles* an Admirable Author; he says, he is the most considerable of all the Greek Poets; and, for the most part, beyond *Virgil* too. He stiles the *Philoctetes*, a Divine Tragedy; and seems as it were astonish'd, that *Sophocles* could speak so many fine things upon such a Barren Subject. And he also cries up his *Oedipus Tyrannus*, as a most Beautiful Piece. To Conclude, he tells us, Whoever has Read *Sophocles* well, is no small Proficient in the Greek Tongue; and that it is a Thousand pities, we have lost so many of his most Excellent Tragedies.

Vossius, in the Second Book of his *Institutiones Poeticæ*, pag. 75. tells us, That the Style of *Sophocles* is not only Sublime, Lofty, and Magnificent, but also Pure and Correct.

The same Author, in the same Book, pag. 53. says, That *Sophocles* transcends *Euripides* in High, Majestick Expressions; but, that *Euripides* excels him in neatness and compactness of Style.

Borrichius, in his *Dissert. Acad. De Poetis*, pag. 30. observes, That *Sophocles*, by his Style, seems to be rather a Man for business, than for words; whereas the Style of *Euripides*, savours more of the Scholar, and the Orator.

Rapin, in the Second Part of his *Reflex. on Arist. of Poësie*, sect. xxii. takes notice, That *Sophocles* is too elaborate in his Discourse; that his Art is not hid enough in some of his Pieces, it lies too open, and too near the light; that he sometimes becomes Obscure, by his too great affectation

tion to be Sublime ; and the Nobleness of his Expression, is injurious to the perspicuity ; His *Plots*, says *Rapin*, are not all so happily *unravell'd*, as that of the *Oedipus*. The *Discovery* in the *Ajax* answers not to the *Intrigue* ; the Author ought not to have ended a Spectacle of that Terror and Pity, with a dull and frivolous Contest about the Sepulture of *Ajax*, who then had Slain himself. And in the same Piece, says *Rapin*, that *Machin* of *Minerva* is too violent, who casts an Enchantment over the Eyes of *Ajax*, to save *Ulysses*, whom *Ajax* would have kill'd, if he had known him. *Oedipus*, says *Rapin*, ought not to have been ignorant of the *Assassinat* of the King of *Thebes* ; the ignorance he is in of the *Murder*, which makes all the Beauty of the *Intreague*, is not probable.

Dryden, in the Preface to his *Oedipus*, says, That *Oedipus* was the most Celebrated Piece of all Antiquity ; that *Sophocles*, not only the greatest Wit, but one of the greatest Men in *Athens*, made it for the Stage at the Publick Cost, and that it had the Reputation of being his Master-Piece, not only amongst the Seven of his which are still remaining, but of the greater Number which are Perish'd.

Aristotle has more than once admir'd it in his Book of Poetry.

Jacobus Thomasius, in his *De Plagio Literario*, tells us, That *Sophocles* was so great a Plagiary, that *Philostratus* of *Alexandria* Wrote a Piece on purpose, to shew from what Authors he had Stole.

Edmund Spencer,

A Famous English Poet, born in the City of London, and brought up in Pembroke-Hall in Cambridge; He flourisht in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth. His great Friend was Sir Philip Sidney, by whose means he was preferr'd to be Secretary to his Brother Sir Henry Sidney, who was sent Deputy into Ireland, where he is said to have written his *Fairy-Queen*; but upon the return of Sir Henry, his Employment ceasing, he also return'd into England, and having lost his great Friend Sir Philip, fell into Poverty; whereupon he address't himself to Queen Elizabeth, presenting her with a Poem, with which she was so well pleas'd, that he had order'd him 500*l.* for his support, which nevertheless was abridg'd to One Hundred Pounds by the Lord Treasurer Cecil, who hearing of it, and owing him a grudge for some Reflections in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, cry'd out to the Queen, *What all this for a Song?* This he is said to have taken so much to Heart, that he contracted a deep Melancholy, which soon after brought his life to a Period, *Anno Dom. 1598.*

Edward Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, says, That Spencer was the first of our English Poets that brought Heroick Poesie to any perfection; his *Fairy-Queen* being for great Invention and Poetick Height, judg'd little Inferior, if not Equal to the Chief of the Ancient Greeks and Latins, or Modern Italians; But the first Poem that brought him into Esteem, was his *Shepherds Kalendar*. This Piece was highly admir'd by Sir Philip Sidney.

Cambden,

Cambden, in his *History of Queen Elizabeth*, says, That *Edmund Spencer* was a *Londoner by Birth*, and a *Scholar also of the University of Cambridge*, born under so favourable an Aspect of the *Muses*, that he surpass'd all the *English Poets of former Times*, not excepting *Chaucer himself*, his Fellow-Citizen. But by a *Fate* which still follows *Poets*, he always wrestled with *Poverty*.

Dr. Fuller, in his *Worthies of England*, affirms, That *Edmund Spencer* was an Excellent Linguist, Antiquary, Philosopher, and Mathematician; yet so poor (as being a *Poet*) that he was thought *Famem non Famæ scribere*.

Sir William Temple, in his *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 46, 47. remarks, That the *Religion of the Gentiles*, had been woven into the *Contexture* of all the *Ancient Poetry*, with a very agreeable Mixture; which made the *Moderns* ass&t, to give that of *Christianity* a place also in their Poems. But the *true Religion*, was not found to become *Fiction* so well, as a *False* had done, and all their Attempts of this Kind, seem'd rather to debase *Religion*, than to heighten *Poetry*. *Spencer*, says *Temple*, endeavour'd to supply this with *Morality*, and to make *Instruction*, instead of *Story*, the Subject of an *Epick Poem*. His Execution was Excellent, and his Flights of Fancy very Noble and High, but his Design was poor, and his *Moral* lay so bare, that it lost the *Effect*; 'tis true, says *Temple*, the Pill was Gilded, but so thin, that the Colour and the Taste were too easily discover'd.

Rimer, in the *Preface* to his Translation of *Rapin's Reflexions on Aristotle of Poesie*, tells us, That in his Judgment, *Spencer* may be reckon'd the first of our *Heroick Poets*; He had a large Spirit, a sharp Judgment, and a Genius for *Heroick Poesie*, perhaps above any that ever writ since *Virgil*. But our Misfortune is, says *Rimer*,

mer, he wanted a true *Idea*; and lost himself, by following an unfaithful Guide. Though besides *Homer* and *Virgil* he had read *Tasso*, yet he rather suffer'd himself to be misled by *Ariosto*; with whom blindly rambling on *marvellous Adventures*, he makes no Conscience of *Probability*. All is Fanciful and Chimerical, without any Uniformity, or without any foundation in Truth; in a Word, his Poem (says *Rimer*) is perfect *Fairy-Land*.

Dryden, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of Dorset before the Translation of *Juvenal*, pag. viii. says, That the English have only to boast of *Spencer* and *Milton*, in *Heroick Poetry*; who neither of them wanted either *Genius*, or *Learning*, to have been perfect *Poets*; and yet both of them are liable to many Censures. For there is no *Uniformity* in the Design of *Spencer*: He aims at the Accomplishment of no one Action: He raises up a *Hero* for every one of his Adventures; and endows each of them with some particular *Moral Virtue*, which renders them all equal, without Subordination or Preference. Every one is most valiant in his own *Legend*; only (says Dryden) we must do him that justice, to observe, that *Magnanimity*, which is the Character of Prince *Arthur*, shines throughout the whole Poem; and Succours the rest, when they are in distress. The Original of every Knight, was then living in the Court of Queen *Elizabeth*: And he attributed to each of them that Virtue, which he thought was most conspicuous in them: An Ingenious piece of flattery, tho' it turn'd not much to his Account. Had he liv'd to finish his Poem, in the six remaining *Legends*, it had certainly been more of a piece; but cou'd not have been perfect, because the *Model* was not *true*. But Prince *Arthur*, or his chief Patron, Sir *Philip Sidney*, whom he intended to make happy,

happy, by the Marriage of his *Gloriana*, dying before him, depriv'd the Poet, both of Means and Spirit, to accomplish his Design: For the rest, his *Obsolete Language*, and the *ill Choice* of his *Stanza*, are faults but of the Second Magnitude: For notwithstanding the *first* he is still Intelligible, at least, after a little practice; And for the *last*, he is the more to be admir'd; that labouring under such a difficulty, his Verses are so Numerous, so Various, and so Harmonious, that only *Virgil*, whom he has profestly imitated, has surpass'd him, among the *Romans*; And only Mr. *Waller* among the *English*, says *Dryden*.

The Expence of his Funeral and Monument was defray'd at the sole charge of *Robert*, first of that Name, Earl of *Essex*. He lies buried in *Westminster-Abbey*, near *Chaucer*, with this *Epitaph*:

Edmundus Spencer, *Londinensis, Anglicorum Poetarum nostri seculi fuit Princeps, quod ejus Poemata, faventibus Musis, & victuro genio conscripta comprobant.*
Obiit immaturâ morte, Anno Salutis, 1598. & prope Galfredum Chaucerum conditur, qui fælicissimè Poesin Anglicis literis primus illustravit. In quem hæc Scripta sunt Epitaphia.

Hic prope Chaucerum situs est Spenserius, illi Proximus Ingenio, proximus ut Tumulo.
Hic prope Chaucerum Spensere poeta poetam Conderis, & versu! quam tumulo propriet.
Anglica te vivo vixit, plausitque Poesis;
Nunc moritura timet, te moriente, mori.

Publius Papinius Statius,

A Neopolitan, who flourisht under Domitian, though by some confounded with *Statius Surculus* the great Rhetorician of Tholeuse, in the time of Nero.

There are of his Writings extant, his *Thebais*, his *Achilleis*, and his *Sylvæ*.

Vossius, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, observes, That it is very remarkable, that *Martial*, who was a great admirer of *Stella* the Poet, should never make any mention of *Statius*, who was so intimate with *Stella*, that he Dedicated to him the first Book of his *Sylvæ*. But *Vossius* supposes, this might proceed from Envy and Emulation in *Martial*; who could not brook it, that *Papinius* should be so much in *Domitian's* favour, on the account of his having so good a Knack in making *Ex-tempore-Verses*; wherein, as *Vossius* tells us, he far excell'd *Martial*.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, pag. 843, 844. calls *Statius* a most polite, and a most ingenious Poet. He says, there are none either of the Ancient or Modern Poets, that did tread so near to the heels of *Virgil*; and that he had come nearer him, if he had not affected to follow him too close. For being in his own nature high and lofty, whenever he endeavour'd to excel, and exert himself, he presently fell into Expressions, that were too haughty and swelling. But beyond all dispute, unless it be that *Phenix* of the Age, *Virgil*, there are none else of the Heroick Poets, says *Scaliger*, whether Greek or Latin, that can be compar'd

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to this our Author; whose Verses are to be preferr'd before those of Homer.

Stephanus Claverius, in his Notes upon *Claudian*, stiles him, The Noble and Generous *Statius*, and one of an admirable quick Wit.

Isaac Casaubon, in his Comment upon *Suetonius* of *Domitian*, calls *Statius*, An Excellent Poet.

Turnebus, in the Twenty Sixth Book of his *Adversaria*, cap. 23. says, That *Papinius* was a very good Poet.

Mich. de Marolles, in the Preface to his French Translation of *Statius*, complains, That the Works of this Author, are not so much valued as they ought to be; since, as he declares, unless it be *Virgil*, he knows none that surpasses him.

Hugo Grotius, in a Letter to *Gronovius*, dated at *Paris*, Decemb. x. 1637. says, He always had a great esteem for *Papinius*, whom he reckon'd not much inferior to *Virgil* for all sorts of Learning; nay, even in Poetry, says *Grotius*, take him in some respects, (if the Criticks will pardon me for saying so) he is not much behind him, if any thing at all.

Justus Lipsius, in the first Century of *Epistles*, Epist. 13. calls *Papinius*, A sublime and lofty Poet; who, whatever others may think, was, in his Opinion, neither haughty, nor affected in his Style.

Borrichius, de Poetis, pag. 62. tells us, That *Statius*, the Favourite of *Domitian*, had wrote several things, in a learned and lofty Style; but, that many of them were lost, and among others, that famous Tragedy of his, the *Agave*, which by reason of his Poverty he was fain to sell to *Paris*, that he might Publish it as his own. We have now extant his *Sylvae*, in five Books; his *Thebais*,

bais, in Twelve Books; and his *Achilleis*, in two. In all which several Pieces, says *Borrificius*, his Style generally appears to be florid, Choice, and Magnificent; yet in his *Sylvae*, the Style is purer, and more natural; in his *Thebais*, fuller of Art; and in his *Achilleis*, it is more uneven. Hence therefore, some of the *Criticks* declare, That it is with *Statius* among the *Poets*, as it was with *Alexander the Great* among the *Heroes*, viz. that his great *Virtues* were mix'd with great *Vices*; And that sometimes his Verse runs in a truly lofty, majestick Strain; and sometimes he mounts above the Clouds in a high, bombastick Style; and then again, *Icarus* like, he falls from the greatest height, down to the very ground. And therefore *Famianus Strada* very properly supposes *Statius*, to be seated upon the very highest part of *Parnassus's Hill*, and in so much danger, that he seems to be like a Man, who is just ready to fall.

Rapin, in the first part of his *Reflex. on Aristotle's Book of Poesie*, sect. 18. says, That those who place the *Essence of Poetry* in big and pompous words, as *Statius* among the *Latins*, and *Du Bartas* among the *French*, are much mistaken in their account, when they aspire to the Glory of *Poetry* by such feeble means.

The same Author, sect. 30. remarks, That *Statius*, by an Affectation of great Words, and swelling Expressions, fills the *Ears*, without ever touching the *Heart*.

He further observes, in the Second part of those *Reflexions*, sect. xv. That *Statius* is as fantastical in his *Idea's*, as in his *Expressions*; and that his Two Poems, the *Thebais* and *Achilleis*, have nothing in them regular, all is vast and disproportional.

Dryden, in his *Apology for Heroick Poetry*, observes to us, That *Lucan* and *Statius* were Men of an unbounded

bounded Imagination, but who often wanted the Poize of Judgment.

The same Author, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of Dorset before the *Translat.* of *Juvenal*, pag. vii. calls *Statius*, The best Versificator next to *Virgil*; but yet he says, He knew not how to *Design* after him, tho' he had the *Model* in his Eye.

Sir John Suckling,

WAS born at *Witham* in the County of *Middlesex*, in the Year 1613. and which was Extraordinary, in the beginning of the Eleventh Month, according to his Mother's Reckoning. Nor was his Life less remarkable, than his Birth: For he had so pregnant a Genius, that he spoke *Latin* at Five Years Old, and writ it at Nine Years of Age. His incomparable Parts made him much taken notice of in the Reign of King Charles the First, to whom he was *Comptroller*. His Skill in *Languages*, and *Musick*, was remarkable; but above all his *Poetry*, says *Langbaine*, took with all the People, whose Souls were polish'd by the Charms of the *Muses*.

This Ingenious Gentleman died of a Feaver, being about 29 Years of Age.

Besides his *Poems*, he wrote three *Plays*, the *Goblins*, a *Tragi-Comedy*; *Brennoralt*, a *Tragedy*; and *Aglaura*, a *Tragi-Comedy*.

Winstanley,

Winstanley says, That Sir John Suckling, in his time, the Delight of the Court, and Darling of the Muses; was one so fill'd with Phœbean Fire, as for Excellency of Wit, was worthy to be Crown'd with a Wreath of Stars; though some Attribute the strength of his Lines toavour more of the *Grape* than the *Lamp*. Indeed he made Poetry his Recreation, not his Study; and did not so much seek Fame, as it was put upon him. In my mind, says *Winstanley*, he gives the best Character of himself, in those Verses of his in the *Sessions of the Poets*:

Suckling next was call'd, but did not appear,
But straight one whisper'd Apollo i'th' ear,
That of all Men living he car'd not for't,
He lov'd not the Muses so well as his Sport:

And prized black Eyes, or a lucky hit
At Bowles, above all the Trophies of Wit.
But Apollo was angry, and publickly said,
'Twere fit that a Fine were set upon's head.

Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, calls Sir John Suckling, A Witty and Elegant Courtier; whose Works, Entituled *Fragmenta Aurea*, have a pretty touch of a Gentile Spirit, and seem to favour more of the *Grape*, than the *Lamp*, and still keep up their Reputation equal with any Writ so long ago.

Lloyd, in his *Memoirs*, pag. 159: gives this Character of Sir John Suckling, That He had the strange happiness to make whatsoever he did, become him. His Poems being clean, sprightly, and Natural; his Discourses, Full and Convincing; his Plays, Well-humour'd and

and Taking; his *Letters*, Fragrant and Sparkling; only his *Thoughts* were not so loose as his *Expression*, witness his Excellent Discourse to my Lord of Dorset about Religion.

Torquato Tasso,

TH E Chief of Italian Heroick Poets, the Son of Bernardo Tasso, and Portia de Rubeis; He was born at Sorrento, an Ancient City of Italy, about 18 Miles from Naples, on the tenth of April, 1544. He died at Rome on the twenty seventh of March, 1595.

His chief Poems are, *Gierusalemme Liberata*; *Gierusalemme Conquistata*; *Rinaldo*; *Torismondo*, a Tragedy; *le Sette Giornate del Mondo creato*; and *Amintas*, a *Pastoral*.

Baillet, in the *Jugemens des Scavans*, tells us, That about the latter End of the last Century, and the beginning of this, it was with great heat disputed among the *Italians*, which was to have the Preference, *Tasso* or *Ariosto*; but (*says he*) now, this Controversie is at an End; And, in spight of the Academy *La Crusca*, and of some others who are less Considerable, *Tasso* does at this day carry it not only from *Ariosto*, but likewise from all the Rest of the *Italian Poets*; And, says Baillet, this great Reputation *Tasso* acquir'd not by favour, but by merit.

Thuanus, in his History of the Year 1595, calls *Tasso*, A Man of an Admirable, and Prodigious Wit; who, as Thuanus

Thuanus says, from his Youth was troubled with a sort of *Frenzy*, that was incurable; but yet, in his *lucid Intervals*, he Wrote a great many things both in *Prose* and *Verse*, with so much Judgment, Elegancy, and Politeness of Style, that the Compassion Men had for his Misfortune, was at last turn'd into wonder and astonishment: For whereas other Men, who have this distemper, are generally disorder'd in their *Intellectuals*, one way or other; it had a quite contrary effect upon him; for hereby his Wit was render'd more Pure and Volatile; his Fancy and Imagination became more quick and ready; so that he could with greater ease, make use of his Inventive Faculty; and he also manag'd his Subject with the greater judgment, and exactness: And, to conclude, this *Frenzy*, of his, furnish'd him with Nobler Thoughts and *Ideas*, as also with more Masculine and Choice Expressions. But what was still more Wonderful and Surprizing, was, that *Tasso*, immediately after he came out of one of these *Fits*, would Compose his *Verses* with the greatest Sedateness of Mind, that could be; and to such a degree of excellence, that scarce any Man, of the greatest Parts, though he had never so much Leisure, could have transcended; so that instead of taking *Tasso* for one who had lost his Senses, we might rather (says *Thuanus*) have lookt on him, as a Man *Divinely inspir'd*.

Anthony Theissier, in his Additions of the *Elogies* made by *Thuanus*, says, That *Tasso* at 18 Years of Age, Compos'd that Excellent Poem of his, the *Rinaldo*, the first Fruit of his Admirable Genius, and which gain'd him the esteem of all such, as had any delicacy of Taste for things of this Nature. Indeed, what *Longinus* said of the *Odysses*, That it was the Work of an Old Man, but, that this Old

Old Man was *Homer*; The same may we say with the famous *M. Menage*, That *Rinaldo* is the Work of a Young Man, but, that this Young Man was *Torquato Tasso*.

Teissier also informs us, That *Tasso* was but 22 Years Old, when he begun his *Gierusalemme Liberata*, that Incomparable Poem, the most accomplish'd Piece that has been since the Age of *Augustus*, in the opinion of the most Judicious Criticks, and especially of *M. de Balzac*, who affirm'd, with a great deal of Eloquence and Reason, That as *Virgil* is the cause of *Tasso*'s not having the first Place among the *Epic Poets*, so *Tasso* is the cause that *Virgil* is not the only *Epic Poet*. But yet, says *Teissier*, as there is nothing in this World absolutely Perfect, so there are some things in this Poem, as his Description of the Palace of *Armida*, and some other Particular things, which he mingles with his Narrations, that have somewhat both Childish and Impertinent in them, which seems by no means agreeable to the Gravity of an *Epic Poem*, where every thing ought to be Great and Majestic. And *Teissier* further observes, That *Tasso* in this Poem, does not always keep up the Dignity of his Character, in Discourses of Passion and Gallantry; and many other Defects *Teissier* takes notice of. But it seems, *Tasso* himself was sufficiently sensible of the several Imperfections of this Poem, which caus'd him to Write another upon the same Subject, which he call'd *Gierusalemme Conquistata*.

Teissier says, There are some, who look upon his *Aminatas* to be his chief Master-Piece; nay, and they tell us, That *Tasso* himself was of that Opinion, and that he valu'd this Comedy above all his other Pieces of Poetry; as he thought his *Tragedy*, Intituled *Torismondo*, to be the worst. But however it be, says *Teissier*, this is certain, that

that the *Amintas* hath been imitated by the best of the Italian Poets, and especially by the *Chevalier Guarini*, and by the Count *Guidabaldo Bonacelli*, and that *Pastor Fido* and the *Filli di Sciro*, are but Copies of that excellent Piece. And for this reason, *Boccalin* in his *Par-nassus* feign'd, That the Italian Poets having broke open *Tasso's* private Desk, where he kept his choicest Compositions, stole away his *Amintas*, which they divided amongst themselves; and that it might not be discover'd, they fled to the Palace of *Imitation*, as to a Secure Sanctuary.

Rapin, in the first part of his *Reflexions on Aristotle of Poesie*, sect. 19. remarks, That the most perfect Design of all Modern Poems, is that of *Tasso*, nothing more Compleat has appear'd in Italy, though great faults are in the Conduct of it. And in the Second Part, sect. xiii. he enumerates several of the Faults; as his mixing in his Poem the light Character with the serious, and all the force and Majesty of *Heroick*, with the Softness and Delicacy of the *Eglogue* and *Lyrick Poesie*. For the *Shepherds* adventures with *Herminia* in the *Seventh Canto*, and the Letters of her *Lovers Name*, which she Carv'd on the Bark of *Bays* and *Beeches*; the *Moan* she made to the *Trees* and *Roeks*; the *Purling Streams*, the *Embroider'd Meadows*; the *Singing of Birds*, in which the Poet himself took so much pleasure; the *Enchanted Wood* in the *Thirteenth Canto*; the *Songs of Armida* in the *Fourteenth* to inspire *Rinaldo* with Love, the *Caresses* this Sorceress made him, the *Description* of her *Palace*, where nothing is breath'd but Softness and Effeminacy, and those other affected Descriptions, have nothing of that *Grave* and *Majestick Character*, which is proper for *Heroick Verse*.

Dryden, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of Dorset before the Translation of *Juvenal*, observes, That *Tasso*, whose *Design* was Regular, and who observ'd the Rules of *Unity in Time and Place*, more closely than *Virgil*, yet was not so happy in his *Action*; he confesses himself to have been too *Lyrical*, that is, to have Written beneath the Dignity of *Heroick Verse*, in his *Episodes of Sophronia*, *Erminia*, and *Armida*; his Story is not so pleasing as *Ariosto's*; he is too flatulent sometimes, and sometimes too dry; many times unequal, and almost always forc'd; and besides, is full of Conceits, Points of Epigram and Witticisms; all which are not only below the Dignity of *Heroick Verse*, but contrary to its Nature, says Dryden.

The same Author, in the *Preface* to his *Mock-Astrologer*, tells us, That *Tasso*, the most Excellent of *Modern Poets*, and whom he reverences next to *Virgil*, has taken both from *Homer* many admirable things which are left untouched by *Virgil*, and from *Virgil* himself where *Homer* cou'd not furnish him.

Sir William Temple, in his *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 46. says, That *Ariosto* and *Tasso*, enter'd boldly upon the Scene of *Heroick Poems*; but having not Wings for so high Flights, began to learn of the Old Ones, fell upon their Imitations, and Chiefly of *Virgil*, as far as the Force of their *Genius*, or Disadvantage of New Languages and Customs would allow.

Publius Terentius,

A Comical Poet, Born at *Carthage*; who at *Rome* serving *Terentius Lucanus*, by his means got acquaintance with *Caius Lælius*, and *Scipio Africanus*; by whom (it was suppos'd) he was assisted in writing his Plays.

Nor do *Valgiius* and *Memmius* stick to affirm, That some *Comedies* which go under the Name of *Terence* were entirely *Scipio's*. He was also a great Imitator of *Menander*, whom he owns to have follow'd in many of his *Comedies* almost Word for Word.

There are extant, Six of *Terence's Comedies*.

Daniel Heinius, in his *Dissertatio before Terence*, says, That the pleasantness, as also the Elegancy, Judgment, and Beauty, which is to be found in this *Author*, is admirable, and hardly to be express'd. Of the Graces and Beauty of which *Author*, as *Joseph Scaliger* once said, not one Scholar of a Hundred is a Competent Judge.

Erasmus, in the 28th. Book of his *Epistles*, Epist. 20. tells us, There is no Author, from whom we can better Learn the pure *Roman Style*, than from *Terence*; and that there is more exact Judgment in one *Comedy* of *Terence*, than in the several *Comedies* of *Plautus*, put 'em all together.

Jacobus Crucius, in the Third Book of his *Epistles*, in an Epist. to *Francis Leeuvius*, informs us, That *Joseph Scaliger*, when he was an Old Man, and after he had run through almost all the *Arts and Sciences*, was so great an Admirer of *Terence*, that he seldom had him out of his Hand; And that he was never cloy'd with Reading this Incomparable Author.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poetica*, pag. 766. remarks, That *Terence* did so much aff. & Purity of Style, that he at any time had rather shew a Roughness in his Temper, than in his Expressions; And that as *Plautus* was for accomodating Words to Things; so *Terence* chose rather to suit Things to Words.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. calls *Plautus* and *Terence*, the best and choicest of all the Latin Authors; and says that their Style is to be us'd before any other.

Vossius, in the Fourth Book of his *Institutiones Oratoriae*, pag. 25. immediately after *Cicero*, gives the next Place to *Cæsar* and *Terence*, for a true, proper Roman Style.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag 44. wishes, that *Terence* had employ'd his Talent upon some better Subject, every thing in him being so neat, so proper, and so pure; he is modest even in his Metaphors, nor are his Jests idle, or abusive.

Liphias, in the Second Book of his *Epistolicæ Quæstiōnes*, Epist. 18. observes, That *Plautus* is often so obscene in his Jests, and so Loose and Immoral, that he is scarce fit for a Sober Man to Read; But, that *Terence* is every where so Modest, so Chaste, and so Bashful, that even a *Vestal* need not be afraid of his Company.

Vossius, in the Second Book of his *Institutiones Poeticæ*, pag. 125. tells us, *Plautus* deserv'd not so much Commendation as *Terence*; in that his Aim and Design was, to please the People in General, without making any distinction; whereas all that *Terence* desir'd, was, to gain the Approbation of Some Few, who were Men of the best Reputation.

Monsieur

Monsieur *Hedelin*, Abbot of *Aubignac*, in his 3d. Book of *The Art of the Stage*, chap. 2. remarks, That *Terence* is pleasanter to read than *Plautus*, because he is more Elegant; but *Plautus* took better with the *Romans*, because he is fuller of Action. *Terence* has many serious Moral Sayings, which is not the proper Work of Comedy, where the Spectators Design is to laugh. But *Plautus*, says *Hedelin*, is full of Intrigues, from which many Jests, and Ingenious Railleries are created, and that's the Thing we wish for in Comedy.

Rapin, in the 2d. part of his *Reflexions on Aristotle of Poesie*, sect. 26 observes, That *Terence's Plots* are more naturally unravell'd, than those of *Plautus*; as those of *Plautus* are more natural than those of *Aristophanes*. And though *Cæsar* call *Terence* a Diminitive *Menander*, because he only had the Sweetness and the Smoothness, but had not the force and vigor, yet (says *Rapin*) he has writ in a manner so natural, and so judicious, that of a *Copy*, as he was, he is become an *Original*; for never Man had so clear an insight into *Nature*.

St. *Euremont*, in his *Miscellaneous Essays*, in his Judgment upon *Seneca*, takes notice, that *Terence* is generally said, to be the best of all the Ancient Authors, for hitting the Humours and Tempers of Men: But, says St. *Euremont*, there is this Objection to him, That he has not Extent enough; and his whole Talent goes no further, than to give a true, and natural Representation of a *Servant*, an *Old Man*, a *Covetous Father*, a *Debauch'd Son*, or a *Slave*. This is the utmost of what *Terence* can do. You are not to expect from him, any thing of *Gallantry*, or *Passion*, or of the *Thoughts*, or *Discourse* of a *Gentleman*.

Quintilian says, That Terence's Writings were the most Elegant of the Kind; but, that they would yet have been more beautiful, if the Verse had been the Iambick of Six Feet. But some of the Modern Criticks have taken great offence at this Exception of Quintilian; and among the rest, Boeclerus says, that Georg. Fabricius had reason to confute Quintilian in this particular.

Theocritus,

A Sicilian Poet, of Syracuse; he flourish'd in the 123d. Olympiad, in the time of Ptolemæus Philadelphus. He was put to Death by the Command of Hiero the Tyrant, for having made some Reflexions on him.

He wrote Bucolicks in the Dorick Dialect, which Virgil in his Bucolicks imitates.

Although Theocritus was not the first Inventer of the Bucolick Verse, yet he is allow'd to be the first that brought it to perfection. Hence therefore it is, that either his Name, or that of his Country, is sometimes apply'd, by way of Epithet, to this kind of Verse, as it appears by the Example of Virgil:

*Prima Syracusio dignata est ludere Versu
Nostra, nec erubuit sylvas habitare Thaleia.* Virg. Eclog. 6.

Quintilian, in his Tenth Book, chap. 1. says, That Theocritus is admirable in his Kind; but, that his Muse is clownish, and is afraid of the Court and City.

Daniel

Daniel Heinsius, in his Edition of *Theocritus*, calls him the chief of *Bucolick* Writers, an Author whose Graces and Beauty no one sufficiently comprehends.

Borrichius; in his *De Poetis*, pag. 12. affirms, That *Theocritus's* Style, to such as thoroughly understand it, seems to be natural, easie, and sweet, and in its Kind admirable; that *Virgil* lik'd it so well, that in his *Bucolicks* he propos'd it for his imitation; but, that he did not always arrive at the extraordinary sweetness of *Theocritus*.

Rapin, in the 2d. part of his *Reflexions on Aristotle of Poesie*, sect. 27. says, That the *Models* to be propos'd to write well in the *Eglogue* or *Bucolick*, are *Theocritus* and *Virgil*. He says, *Theocritus* is more sweet, more natural, and more delicate, by the Character of the Greek Tongue. *Virgil* is more judicious, more exact, more regular, and more modest, by the Character of his own *Wit*, and by the *Genius* of the Latin Tongue. *Theocritus* has more of all the Graces that make the ordinary Beauty of Poetry; *Virgil* has more of good Sense, more vigor, more nobleness, more modesty. After all, says Rapin, *Theocritus* is the Original, *Virgil* is only the Copy: Though some things he hath *Copied* so happily, that they equal the Original in many places.

Dryden, in his *Preface to Sylvæ*, or the Second Part of *Poetical Miscellanies*, observes, That that which distinguishes *Theocritus* from all other Poets, both Greek and Latin, and which raises him even above *Virgil* in his *Elegies*, is the inimitable tenderness of his Passions; and the natural Expression of them in Words so becoming of a *Pastoral*. A Simplicity shines through all he writes: He shows his Art and Learning by disguising both. His *Shepherds* never rise above their Country Education in their Complaints of Love: There is the same

same difference betwixt *Him* and *Virgil*, as there is betwixt *Tasso's Aminta*, and the *Pastor Fido* of *Guarini*. *Virgil's Shepherds* are too well read in the Philosophy of *Epicurus*, and of *Plato*; and *Guarini's* seem to have been bred in *Courts*. But *Theocritus* and *Tasso*, have taken theirs from *Cottages* and *Plains*. It was said of *Tasso*, in relation to his Similitudes, *Mai esce del Bosco*: That he never departed from the *Woods*, that is, all his Comparisons were taken from the Country: The same, *Dryden* observes, may be said of our *Theocritus*; he is softer than *Ovid*, he touches the Passions more delicately; and performs all this out of his own *Fond*, without diving into the Arts and Sciences for a supply. Even his *Dorick Dialect* has an incomparable Sweetness in its *Clownishness*, like a fair *Shepherdess* in her *Countrey Russet*, talking in a *Yorkshire Tone*. This (says *Dryden*) was impossible for *Virgil* to imitate; because the severity of the *Roman Language* denied him that advantage. *Spencer* has endeavour'd it in his *Shepherds Calendar*; but neither will it succeed in *English*, for which reason, *Dryden* says, he forbore to attempt it.

Tanneguy le Ferre, in his *Abridgment* of the Lives of the Greek Poets, remarks, That the *Dorick Dialect* which *Theocritus* uses, is much sweeter than the Language of the first *Doricks*. He says, whoever will but examine the Character of this Poet, will find him very easie and natural: And, that this Author has the same advantage over *Virgil* in *Bucolicks*, as the *Greek Language* has over the *Latin* in that respect.

Albius Tibullus,

A Roman Knight, Born in the same Year with *Ovid*, being in the Second Year of the 184th. Olympiad. He flourisht about 18 Years before Christ. He was very intimate with *Horace* and *Ovid*. What Estate he had, he consum'd, being one of an Amorous Complexion.

He was Famous for his *Elegies*; Four Books whereof he Compos'd, which were commonly Printed with *Catullus*.

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, says, That *Tibullus* went beyond all the *Latin Poets* for expressing the Passions; as also for Elegance, and sweetnes of Temper.

Quintilian, in his Tenth Book, cap. i. thought *Tibullus*, for *Elegy*, to be the most pure and Elegant of all the *Poets*: though, as he tells us, some prefer'd *Propertius* before him.

Rolandus Maresius, in his Second Book of *Epistles*, Epist. 6. tells us, That, though it may be thought a Piece of Confidence in him, to contradict so great a Critick as *Quintilian*, who seems to prefer *Tibullus*; yet, for my part, says *Maresius*, I own, I am one of those, who give the preference to *Propertius*. For although *Tibullus* be wonderfully Pleasant and Elegant, and much more Correct in the *Latin Tongue* than the other (who often imitates the Greek Poets) and is also more curious and exact in his Verse; yet *Propertius* seems to surpass him in Learning, and in sweetnes of Temper. But, as *Maresius* observes, though *Propertius* was of such an Excellent Severe Temper; yet he does sometimes express his Passions

with as much Heat and Vehemency, as the hottest Lover of 'em all.

Lipshus, in the First Book of his *Variæ Lectiones*, cap. 21. stiles *Tibullus* a Poet exceeding Elegant, in whose Writings the *Latin Tongue* appears according to its true and native Elegance. He says, There are some *Epigrams* concerning the *Amours* of *Sulpitia* and *Cerinthus*, Composed by *Tibullus*, which are indeed very Fine and Beautifull.

Rapin, in the Second Part of his *Reflexions*, sect. 29. remarks, That they who have Writ *Elegy* best amongst the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. He says, *Tibullus* is Elegant and Polite; *Propertius* Noble and High; and *Ovid* is to be Prefer'd to both; because he is more Natural, more Moving, and more Passionate; and thereby he has better express'd the Character of *Elegy* than the others.

The same Author, sect. xiv. observes to us, That *Tibullus*, otherwise so exact and polite in his *Elegies*, falls short in his *Panegyrick of Messala*; so hard is it to praise well.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, pag. 863. says, That *Tibullus* is almost every where Uniform, and of a Piece; that he is Consistent with himself, and sustains his Character; that he generally gives one and the same Turn to things; but yet says *Scaliger*, he is the most Polite of all that ever Writ *Elegies*. He adds, That his so often using the *Infinitive Moods* of the *Præterperfect Tense*, of *Five Syllables*, such as *Continuisse*, *Discubuisse*, *Increpuisse*, *Pertimuisse*, and many others, is a thing very unpleasant, and disagreeable.

The same Author does further remark, That the *Epigrams*, at the end of the Fourth Book, are both hard, Language, and unpleasant; And, that his Poem, wherein

in he praises *Messala*, is so loose, and careless, and so destitute either of Vigor, or Harmony, that 'tis Natural to believe, 'twas Publish'd before it was finish'd, and that he had not leisure to Review it.

Marcus Hieronymus Vida.

AN Excellent Latin Poet, Born at *Cremona*; at last Promoted to the Bishoprick of *Alba*.

His Works consist chiefly of these following Poems, his *Christias*, or Poem of the Life and Death of Christ, in Six Books; his three Books *De Arte Poeticâ*; his Two Books of the Care and Management of Silk-Worms, his Description of the Game at *Chesse*, in one Book; besides *Hymns*, *Odes*, *Bucolicks*, *Eglogues*, &c.

He Died the 27th. Day of *September* 1566. and in the 59th. Year of his Age.

Boissardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illustrium*, says, That *Vida* was such an excellent Poet, that in every body's Opinion, he came very near to *Virgil*; a sufficient Instance whereof, says *Boissard*, is that Famous, and never enough to be admir'd Piece, his *Christias*: a Poem, which (doubtless) for Matter, Composition, and Style, ought justly to be prefer'd, to all that was ever Writ, by the best Poets of this Age.

Lilius Gyraldus, in his *Dialogue of the Poets*, tells us, That no Man in that Age, carry'd Poetry to so great a height as *Vida* did; without any help from the Greeks, following none but *Virgil*. He was, says *Gyraldu*s,

Man of a large Soul, and had a true Poetical Genius ; but his chief Knack lay, in a wonderful, happy way of Disposing, and Illustrating his several Subjects.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, pag. 802, observes, That *Vida* had got a great Reputation by his Three Books *De Arte Poetica*; and that his Honour is the greater, in that he has handled this Subject, with much more Art and Method than ever *Horace* did.

But for all *Scaliger* has given so high a Character of *Vida's* Poem *De Arte Poeticâ*; yet, he is far from owning it to be an Accomplish'd Piece. For in a Letter to his Son *Sylvius*, Printed before his Seven Books *De Poetica*, agrees with him, that *Vida* is a Man of good Sense, and that he has given very good Rules and Instructions; but yet he says, they are more proper for rectifying the Errors of *Poets*, and to make them see their faults, than to Learn them the *Art of Poetry*, and to form their Spirit and Imagination; so that, in a Word, they are not so proper to make a *Poet*, as to form one that is already so.

He further adds, That *Vida* has (indeed) very well re-establish'd that *Order* and *Method*, which is so necessary in the *Art of Poetry*; which *Aristotle* had neglected, and *Horace* had perverted and spoil'd; but, that he has handled his Matter rather as a *Poet*, than like a *Master*; and, that it looks, as if it were rather intended for the *Theater*, than design'd for the *School*.

Julius Saliger, in the same Book, pag. 806. remarks, That of all the several Works, that ever *Vida* Wrote, there were none, that contributed more to his Reputation, than his Two Books concerning *Silk-Worms*. This Poem, says *Scaliger*, is the King of *Vida's* Works. It is much more Correct and Elaborate than his other Poems, and does really contain more of the *Art of Poetry*.

That

That, says *Scaliger*, which deserves to be put in the Second Place, in the Opinion of the *Criticks*, is his Poem of the Game at *Chesse*. The Invention, says *Scaliger*, is pretty enough, although it would better have become a Young Man, than a person of his Gravity. He gives to every thing so fine a *Turn*, that that alone might be sufficient to convince us, that he had an admirable Genius; and the Style of it does very much resemble that of *Virgil*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, pag. 107. says, That *Vida* in his two Poems concerning *Silk-Worms*, and his Description of the Game at *Chesse*, is very exact in his Stile; that he is regular and just in the Disposition, and Ordonance of his *Fable*; equal and well proportion'd in the Distribution of his Parts; that he is full of force and vigor; that he hath a noble *Air*, even in the most minute Matters; And, to conclude, that he is every where Florid and Elegant.

Rapin, in the Second Part of his *Reflections on Aristotle's Book of Poesie*, sett. x. informs us, That *He*, among the *Moderns*, who has the best Genius to sustain all the Nobleness of Narration in *Heroick Verse*, is *Jerom Vida*, Bishop of *Alba*, in his Poem on the Death of *Jesus Christ*; And were it not (says *Rapin*) that sometimes he fell into low Expressions, and Harshnesses, like those of *Lucretius*, his Style had been Incomparable.

But the same Author, sett. 16. tells us, that *Vida* had a good Genius for Writing in *Latin*; that the Purity of his Style is Admirable; but, the Contrivance of his *Fable* has no Delicateness; his Manner holds no sort of Proportion to the Dignity of his Matter, or Subject.

As for the *Hymns*, *Odes*, *Eglogues*, and the other little *Pieces Compos'd by Vida*, we are inform'd by *Borrichius*, that

that they are much inferiour to his Three *Larger Poems*. Nay, *Julius Scaliger* says plainly, They are Childish and Trivial; And, that whenever he had a Mind to imitate *Catullus*, instead of reaching the Natural Graces and Beauties of that excellent *Poet*, he rendered himself mighty ridiculous.

But, if any one thinks this *Censure* of *Scaliger* too severe; let him then be satisfy'd with *Rapin's Remark*, who tells us, that *Vida*, in these little *Pieces*, has a *Fancy* too limited; and his *Idea* seems constrain'd, whilst he is too scrupulously employ'd about the *purity* of his *Latin*.

Publius Virgilius Maro.

THE Prince of the *Latin Heroick Poets*; He was the Son of *Maro*, a mean Person, some say a *Potter*, Born in the Third Year of the 177. *Olympiad*, on the Fifteenth of *October*, about 67 Years before *Christ*, at *Andes*, a Village not far from *Mantua*; whence he is stil'd the *Mantuan Swan*. He died at *Brundusium*, a City of *Calabria*, in *Italy*, on the 22d. of *September*, the Second Year of the 190. *Olympiad*, in the One and Fiftieth Year of his Age.

He Wrote Ten *Elegges* or *Bucolicks*; Four Books of *Georgicks*; and Twelve Books of *Aeneids*.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poetica*, pag. 765. says, That *Virgil* not only excells all *Humane Wit*; but has rais'd himself to a kind of equality with *Nature it self*.

And

And in another place he tells us, That *Virgil* ought to be the Pattern, Rule, Beginning and End of all *Poetical Imitation*.

Macrobius, in the first Book of his *Saturnalia*, cap. 24. observes to us, That it is the peculiar Glory of *Virgil*, that as none by *praising* can add to him; so none by *dispraising*, can detract from him.

'Tis reported of *Cicero*, that happening in his Old Age, to light upon somewhat that *Virgil* had Wrote, who was then very Young; *He*, by way of Prophesy cry'd out, *Magna Spes altera Romæ*.

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, That *Virgil* was so much respected by the Senate and People of Rome, that at any time when they heard any of his Verses in the Theatre, every body presently stood up; and if by chance *Virgil* was present, *Cornelius Tacitus* says, They gave him the same respect, as they did to *Cæsar* himself.

Budæus, in his Third Book *De Aſſe*, remarks, That *Virgil's* Verses might very well be call'd *Golden Verses*; because he receiv'd of *Octavia*, five Pieces of Gold, for Twenty Verses.

Donatius, in the Life of *Virgil*, informs us, That *Virgil* us'd constantly every Morning, to Write down a great many Verses; and in the Afternoon, when he was cooler, and in better temper, he would then Correc&t and Amend them; And, that many times of 'a Hundred Verses, there would not be above half a Dozen left uncorrected; and therefore he would commonly say, that his Works were at first *Monſtrous and Mifhapen*, but like the Bear, at last he lickt them into shape.

Rapin, in the Second Part of his *Reflexions on Aristotle's Book of Poesie*, ſect. xv. says, as for the *Latin Poets*, never any posſeſſ'd all the *Graces of Poesie* in ſo eminent a degree, as *Virgil*; he has an admirable taste for what is

is Natural, an exquisite Judgment for the Contrivance, an incomparable delicacy for the Numbers and Harmony of *Verseification*. The Design of his Poem, well consider'd in all the Circumstances, is (says *Rapin*) the most judicious, and the best devis'd that ever was, or ever will be.

Dryden, in his *Preface to Sylvæ: Or, The Second Part of Poetical Miscellanies*, calls *Virgil*, a succinct and grave Majeslick Writer; One who weigh'd not only every Thought, but every Word and Syllable. Who was still aiming to crowd his Sence into as narrow a compass as possibly he cou'd; for which reason he is so very Figurative, says *Dryden*, that he requires, (I may almost say) a Grammer apart to Construe him. His Verse is every where sounding the very thing in your Ears, whose Sense it bears: Yet the Numbers are perpetually Varied, to increase the Delight of the Reader; so that the same sounds are never repeated twice together. But though he is Smooth where Smoothness is requir'd, yet he is so far from affecting it, that he seems rather to disdain it. For he frequently makes use of *Synalæpha's*, and concludes his Sence in the Middle of his Verse. He is every where above Concepts of *Epigrammatick Wit*, and gross *Hyperboles*: He maintains Majesty in the midst of Plainess; He shines, but glares not; and is Stately without Ambition, which is the vice of *Lucan*.

The same Author in his *Dedication to the Earl of Dorset*, before the *Translation of Juvenal*, pag. 6. observes to us, That *Virgil* has confin'd his Works within the compass of Eighteen Thousand Lines, and has not treated many Subjects; yet he ever had, and ever will have the Reputation of the best Poet. *Martial* says of him, that he cou'd have excell'd *Varius* in *Tragedy*, and *Horace* in *Lyrick Poetry*; but out of deference to his Friends he attempted neither. Sir

Sir William Temple, in his *Essay of Poetry*, pag. 18. remarks, That *Homer* was without Dispute the most Universal Genius that has been known in the World, and *Virgil* the most Accomplish'd. To the first, must be allow'd, the most fertile Invention, the richest Vein, the most general Knowldg, and the most lively Expressions; To the last, the noblest Idea's, the justest Institution, the wisest Conduct, and the Choicest Elocution. But, says *Temple*, to speak in the *Painters Terms*, we find in the Works of *Homer*, the most Spirit, Force, and Life; in those of *Virgil*, the best Design, the truest Proportions, and the greatest Grace; The Colouring in Both seems equal, and indeed, in Both is admirable. *Homer* hath more Fire and Rapture, *Virgil* more Light and Sweetnes; or at least the *Poetical Fire* was more raging in *One*, but clearer in the *Other*; which makes the *first* more amazing, and the *latter* more agreeable. The Oare was richer in *One*, but in t' other, more refin'd, and better allay'd, to make up excellent Work. upon the whole, says *Temple*, I think it must be confess'd, That *Homer* was of the Two, and, perhaps, of all others, the Vastest, the Sublimest, and the most Wonderful Genius; and that he has been generally so esteem'd, there cannot be a greater Testimony given, than what has been by some observ'd, That not only the greatest Masters, have found in his Works, the best and truest Principles of all their Sciences or Arts; but that the noblest Nations, have derived from them, the Original of their several Races, though it be hardly yet agreed, whether his Story be True, or Fiction. In short, says *Temple*, these Two *Immortal Poets*, must be allow'd to have so much excelled in their Kinds, as to have exceeded all Comparison, to have even extinguished Emulation, and in a manner confined *true Poetry*, not

only to their *Two Languages*, but to their very *Persons*. And I am apt to believe, says *Temple*, so much of the true *Genius* of *Poetry* in general, and of its Elevation in these Two Particulars, that I know not, whether of all the Numbers of Mankind, that live within the Compass of a Thousand Years ; for one Man that is Born capable of making such a Poet as *Homer* or *Virgil*, there may not be a Thousand born capable of making as great *Generals* of *Armies*, or *Ministers* of *State*, as any the most Renowned in Story.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 2. says, That *Virgil's Georgicks* are admirable, but he has taken several things from *Aristotle*. His *Æneids* are not so *Correct* as the *Georgicks*, for he intended to have Wrote Four and Twenty Books, as well as *Homer*. This the *Ancients* tell us, was the Reason, that *Virgil* at his Death Commanded they should be Burnt. *Scaliger* also informs us, That the Verse *Ergo ibit in Ignes*, was foisted in since *Virgil's* time, and that it is not of any Ancient Date.

Virgil's Æneids were so much esteem'd of by *Augustus Cæsar*, that after *Virgil's* Death, who had left in charge with some Friends to have that *Poem* burnt, he committed it to the custody and strict care of *Lucius Varius*, and *Plotius Tucca*, with Command, that nothing should be alter'd. Which, says *Pliny*, lib. 7. *Nat. Hist.* cap. 30. gave much a greater Credit and Reputation to the said *Poem*, than if the Author himself had approv'd of it.

Edmund

Edmund Waller,

A Gentleman not many Years Deceas'd: Whose Name will ever be dear to all Lovers of Poetry. His Compositions are Universally applauded; and they are thought fit to serve as a Standard, for all Succeeding Poems. He was a Friend to the Ingenious Fletcher; as appears by his Verses, Printed at the beginning of those Plays; and was so far a lover of Dramatick Poetry, that he Translated part of a Play, in which the Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, was concern'd; viz. *Pompey the Great*, a Tragedy, Acted by the Servants of his Royal Highness the Duke of York; Printed 4to. London, 1664.

Besides this Play, he has a Volume of Poems Extant, which have been several times Reprinted; the Fourth Edition was Printed, Octavo, Lond. 1682. There is newly Publish'd a Second Part, containing his Alteration of *The Maid's Tragedy*, and whatsoever of his was left unprinted, Publisht, 8vo. Lond. 1690.

Waller, a Name that carries every thing in it, that's either Great or Graceful in Poetry. He was indeed the Parent of English Verse, and the First that shew'd us our Tongue had Beauty and Numbers in it. Our Language owes more to him, than the French does to Cardinal Richlieu, and the whole Academy. The Tongue came into his hands, like a Rough Diamond; he Polit'd it first, and to that degree, that all Artists since him have admired the Workmanship, without pretending to mend it. *Sucklin* and *Carew*, wrote some few things

smoothly enough, but as all they did in this kind was not very Considerable, so 'twas a little later than the earliest Pieces of Mr. Waller. He undoubtedly stands first in the List of *Refiners*, and for ought I know, last too; for I question whether in *Charles the Second's Reign*, *English* did not come to its full Perfection; and whether it has not had its *Augustian Age*, as well as the *Latin*. It seems to be already mixt with Foreign Languages, as far as its *purity* will bear; and, as *Chymists* say of their *Menstruum*s, to be quite sated with the Infusion. But Posterity will best judge of this. In the mean time, 'tis a surprizing Reflexion, that between what *Spencer* wrote last, and *Waller* first, there should not be much above Twenty Years distance; and yet the *One's* Language, like the Money of that Time, is as currant now as ever; whilst the *Other's* Words are like Old Coyns, one must go to an *Antiquary* to understand their true Meaning and Value. Such advances may a great Genius make, when it undertakes any thing in earnest. Some *Painters* will hit the chief Lines, and Master Strokes of a Face so truly, that through all the differences of Age, the Picture shall still bear a Resemblance. This Art was Mr. *Waller's*; he sought out, in this flowing Tongue of Ours, what parts would last, and be of standing use and Ornament; and this he did so successfully, that his Language is now as fresh, as it was at first setting out. Were we to judge barely by the *Wording*, we could not know what was Wrote at *Twenty*, and what at *Fourscore*. He complains indeed of a *Tyde of Words* that comes in upon the *English* Poet, o'reflows whate're he Builds: but this was less his Case than any Mans, that ever Wrote; and the mischief on't is, this very complaint will last long enough to confute it self. For though *English* be mouldring Stone,

Stone, as he tells us there; yet he has certainly pickt the best out of a bad *Quarry*.

We are no less beholding to him for the *New Turn of Verse*, which he brought in, and the Improvement he made in *Our Numbers*. Before his Time, Men Rhym'd indeed, and that was all: As for the Harmony of Measure, and that Dance of Words, which good Ears are so much pleas'd with, They knew nothing of it. Their Poetry then was made up almost entirely of *Monosyllables*; which, when they come together in any Cluster, are certainly the most harsh untunable things in the World. If any Man doubts of this, let him Read Ten Lines in *Donne*, and he'll be quickly convinc'd. Besides, their Verses ran all into one another, and hung together, throughout a whole Copy, like the *hook'd Atoms*, that Compose a Body in *Des Cartes*. There was no distinction of Parts, no regular Stops, nothing for the Ear to rest upon.— But as soon as the Copy began, down it went, like a *Larum*, Incessantly; and the Reader was sure to be out of Breath, before he got to the end of it. So that really *Verse* in those days was but down-right *Prose*, tagg'd with *Rhymes*. Mr. *Waller* remov'd all these Faults, brought in more *Poly-syllables*, and smoother Measures; bound up his Thoughts better, and in a Cadence more agreeable to the Nature of the Verse he wrote in: So that where-ever the Natural Stops of that were, he contriv'd the little breakings of his Sense so, as to fall in with 'em. And for that reason, since the stress of *Our Verse* lyes commonly upon the last Syllable, you'll hardly ever find him using a Word of no Force there. I would say, if I were not afraid the Reader would think me too nice, that he commonly closes with *Verbs*,

Verbs, in which we know the Life of Language consists.

Among other Improvements, we may reckon that of his Rhymes: Which are always good, and very often the better for being New. He had a fine Ear, and knew how quickly that Sense was cloy'd by the same round of Chiming Words still returning upon it. 'Tis a decided Case by the great Master of Writing. *Quæ sunt ampla & Pulchra, diu placere possunt, quæ lepida & concinna,* (amongst which Rhyme must, whether it will or no, take its place) *cirò satietate afficiunt aurium Sensum fastidiosissimum.* This Mr. Waller understood very well, and therefore, to take off the danger of a Surfeit that way, strove to please by Variety, and new Sounds. Had he carried this Observation (among others) as far as it would go, it must, methinks, have shewn him the incurable Fault of this *jingling* kind of Poetry, and have led his later Judgment to *Blank Verse*. But he continued an obstinate Lover of Rhyme to the very last: 'Twas a *Mistress* that never appear'd unhandsome in his Eyes, and was Courted by him long after *Sacharissa* was forsaken. He had raised it, and brought it to that Perfection we now enjoy it in: And the Poet's Temper (which has always a little Vanity in it) would not suffer him ever to slight a thing, he had taken so much pains to Adorn. See the *Anonymous Writer* of the *Preface*, before the *Second Part* of Mr. Waller's *Poems*.

Dryden, in his Dedication of *The Rival-Ladies* to the Earl of Orrery, says, That the Excellence and Dignity of Rhyme, were never fully known, till Mr. Waller taught it; he first made Writing easily an Art; first shew'd us to conclude the Sense, most commonly, in

in *Disticks*; which in the Verse of those before him, runs on for so many Lines together, that the Reader is out of breath to over-take it.

Rimer, in his *Short View of Tragedy*, pag. 78. observes, That though the Reformation of the *Italian Language* was begun and finish'd well nigh at the same time by *Boccace*, *Dante*, and *Petrarch*. Our Language retain'd something of the Churl; something of the *Stiff* and *Gothish* did stick upon it, till long after *Chaucer*.

Chaucer threw in *Latin*, *French Provencial*, and other Languages, like new *Stum* to raise a *Fermentation*; In Queen *Elizabeth's* time it grew *Fine*, but came not to an *Head* and *Spirit*, did not Shine and Sparkle, till Mr. *Waller* set it a *running*. And one may Observe by his *Poem on the Navy*, Anno 1632. that not the Language only, but his Poetry then distinguish'd him from all his *Contemporaries*, both in *England* and in other Nations: And from all before him upwards to *Horace* and *Virgil*. For there, besides the Language Clean and Majestick, the Thoughts New, and Noble; the Verse Sweet, Smooth, Fulland Strong; the Turn of the Poem is happy to Admiration.

Waller came last, but was the First whose Art
Just Weight and Measure did to Verse impart;
That of a well-plac'd Word could teach the force,
And shew'd for Poetry a Nobler Course:
His happy Genius did our Tongue Refine,
And easie Words with pleasing Numbers joyn:
His Verses to good Method did apply,
And chang'd harsh Discord to soft Harmony.

*All own'd his Laws; which, long approv'd and try'd,
To present Authors now may be a Guide.
Tread boldly in his Steps, secure from Fear,
And be, like him, in your Expressions Clear.*

Sir William Soame in his Translat. of
Boileau's Art of Poetry, pag. 9.

F I N I S.



